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Magazine



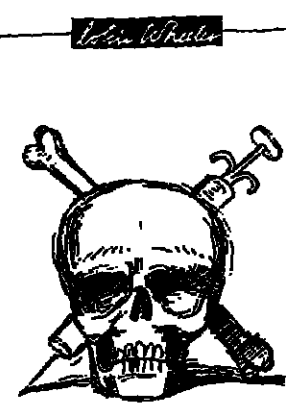
# THE INDEPENDENT

3,044

SATURDAY 20 JULY 1996

WEATHER: Hot and sunny with high humidity 50p (or 65p)

## A silent harvest of death



PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES  
Legal Affairs Editor

It was a grisly enough activity anyway, the business of turning to corpses - nearly a million were "harvested" - to extract growth hormone for injection into needy children. But 16 young adults are now dead because the treatment they received was contaminated with a dose - always fatal - of CJD. A synthetic alternative was quickly found once the alarm bells, belatedly, had penetrated a Department of Health that was trying to ignore a looming crisis. But a macabre trade, already abandoned after the first death in 1985, had already unleashed tragedy.

In a damning judgment yesterday, Mr Justice Morland ruled that the department was to blame for the 16 horrific deaths so far - and for who knows how many more in the future. The department ought to have known that, before 1 July 1977, the treatment carried the risk of transmitting the killer disease, and it was negligent in failing to suspend the treatment programme for most new patients, he said. Almost 2,000 children at risk of dwarfism, and in some cases hypopituitarism, were treated with hormone extracted from the pituitary glands of an estimated 960,000 corpses, between 1959 and 1985, when the human growth hormone (hGH) programme was abruptly terminated.

Spelling out the bizarre details in the High Court in London, the judge said the job of "harvesting" the pituitaries fell originally on mortuary attendants - who were paid 20p a gland as an important addition to their low wages. Alongside that undoubted incentive, they were never given any guidance about which glands to reject. In an astonishing passage in the judgment, the judge said that evidence had been submitted that glands from Alzheimer's disease or dementia victims were not excluded. Parents were never advised of the risks. Noel Baldwin, from Gainsborough, Lincs, whose son, Patrick, died at 30, said: "I feel bitter towards the system that allowed this to happen."

The 16, including the children of eight families involved in yesterday's test case, died between the ages of 20 to 34 after the lengthy incubation periods customarily associated with the disease. Certain death - slow, progressively disabling and humiliating - is faced by three more former patients who have already contracted the degenerative brain disorder. Nearly 1,900 others live with the ticking time bomb of the possibility that they could be next. A further 300 claims for psychological harm are planned by some of these so-called "worried well", who fear they will get the killer disease.

Paul Andrews, 30, from Bromley, Kent, who was treated after October 1977 and 1983 but has not, so far, become ill, said the threat of CJD hanging over him had left him demotivated, afraid of things others considered normal, like getting married and having children. The judgment was a "justification of the years we've spent trying to get word out of the Government. Their silence has only magnified our fears," he said. Women treated with pituitary-derived hormones to combat infertility in the 1960s, 70s and 80s were also awaiting the ruling yesterday.

The outcome of the case was tinged with disappointment, because Mr Justice Morland ruled that only the deaths of people treated after 1 July 1977 were caused by negligence. Parents of children suffering from hypopituitarism will also be excluded from making legal claims. It is not yet clear how many claims in the future will be affected by the cut-off date. David Body, of the solicitors Irwin Mitchell, which brought the case - unconnected with the strain of CJD which triggered the beef crisis - said: "Everybody should receive compensation: pre-1977 families should not be treated differently." Levels of compensation - which could eventually run into

millions, depending on how many cases emerge - are expected to be settled soon, with awards within two months. The judge ruled that important evidence of the risk of CJD was met with "lethargy" and a "lack of urgency" by the department. As warnings from the medical world increased, the department decided, that the "risk of contamination was too awful to contemplate or at least should not be the subject of public knowledge or discussion." A spokesman for the Department of Health, which had already admitted the causal link said: "We will study the findings and consider what response is appropriate." Family's anguish, page 8

The Olympic dream: from Georgia to the winning line on school sports day...

## Atlanta: the tale of two worlds

KEN JONES  
Atlanta

If a demonstration were needed of the different worlds that the Olympics will bring together over the next fortnight, it could be found here on Thursday as competitors prepared to celebrate last night's opening of the Centennial Games.

A press conference held by the millionaires of the US basketball team and attended by hundreds of reporters who crammed into the Olympic press centre coincided with the announcement that the team's star, Shaquille O'Neal, had signed a seven-year contract worth more than \$115m (£75m) to play for the Los Angeles Lakers.

A diamond stud gleaming in the right ear-lobe of another team member, Reggie Miller, epitomised the difference between his world and that of the five athletes representing Burkina Faso who have had to rely on the generosity of local communities here and hand-outs from kit manufacturers.

Attempts to track down the team from a landlocked country in west Africa proved fruitless until they finally showed up in the athletes' village only 48 hours before last night's opening ceremony.

There is a different Olympics. More than half the population of Burkina Faso are under the age of 15. Poor conditions account for a high infant mortality rate. Life expectancy is only 48 for men and 51 for women. Only one third of children attend primary school.

Unable to afford the fees for early arrival in the village, the Burkina Faso team were put up free at the Agnes Scott College in Atlanta. A barbecue was thrown for them last week-end by residents of DeKalb County. A local community activist, Pat Jones, said: "They are so poor. We're hoping the athletes from other countries will invite them to receptions and communicate with them."

The plight of the Burkina Faso athletes could not be further from the multi-million dollar world of the corporate forces that have shaped this Olympics.

Charges of over-commercialisation have brought no denial from the organisers. Given to the city of Coca Cola and CNN, hostage to television and sponsors, the Olympics are almost unrecognisable from the ideal of sporting brotherhood upon which Baron Pierre de Coubertin founded the modern games 100 years ago.

Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee, can claim to have stabilised the economy of an event that almost bankrupted Montreal in 1976. But complaints remain.

Not that you would hear any

from the men and women representing Burkina Faso. Back at the Olympic village, Frank Zio chuckled at the mention of O'Neal's \$115m contract and the vast salaries of the US basketball team. "We cannot think about such things," he said. "It was very difficult for us to get here - almost impossible."

Burkina Faso is represented in the men's high jump by Olivier Sano and in the women's event by Irene Gienerebeogo. Chantal Ouoba competes in the women's triple jump and Idriss Kabore in the boxing. Then there is Zio himself. Doubling up as the team's interpreter, he competes in the long jump. "It is a great experience but there are always difficulties because we have very little money."

A common sight in Atlanta is that of athletes from the Third World and Eastern Europe straggling back to their quarters clutching bags of equipment bearing Nike and Reebok logos.

When the Republic of Georgia competed in the World Judo Championships last year in Macon, there were not enough track suits to go around. After each bout, one team member would hand his gear to the next. "It was a very humbling thing to see," said the Olympic team's attaché, Calvin Hill.

A lot of the athletes from developing and war-torn countries come here without even the basics needed to compete. I don't think we always appreciate the wealth in this country [the US].

When the Ugandan team arrived on 26 June they had very little money and no uniforms. The table tennis players had worn out bats. The track team did not have a starting pistol.

A short distance from the hotel where IOC members are housed in \$250-a-day luxury, Georgia has established a hospitality house that amounts to just two small rooms.

There on Thursday night I spoke with Nito Lekishvili, who ranks second in Georgia's political hierarchy to the President, Eduard Shevardnadze. "We could afford to take up only 36 of the 62 places available to our athletes for these Games," he said. "But any of our people who manage to win medals here will have more in their hearts than those rich young men who play basketball for the United States."

As Lekishvili spoke, police sirens announced the passage through Atlanta of the "Dream Team" on their way to opulent, heavily-secured quarters. Earlier, its one white member, John Stockton was asked whether he felt a sense of loss through isolation from the Olympic brotherhood. "Means nothing to me," he said. "The Olympics is just a chance to win for my country."



Jumping to glory: Pupils entering into the spirit of the sack race at RA Butler Infants' School in Saffron Walden, Essex, yesterday

## Last gasp of the age of steam

PETER RODGERS and CHRIS GODSMARK

Another dark shadow of de-industrialisation passed over Britain yesterday when the Parsons turbine engineering works came under serious threat of closure, with the loss of 1,600 jobs. Steam turbines have none of the romance of the great north-eastern shipyards such as Swan Hunter, which went bust in 1993 and was revived recently for a modest role in ship repairs and conversions.

But for professional engineers everywhere, Parsons is celebrated as the original home of the steam turbine, an invention that put Newcastle on the industrial map of Britain. It revolutionised electricity generation, naval warfare and merchant shipping and, if there is a closure of the Heaton works, it will mark the end of an era in manufacturing.

The company was founded in 1889 by Sir Charles Parsons, who devised the first industrial turbine, after two centuries in which engineers had struggled and failed to turn a toy - first built by Hero of Alexandria in 130AD - into a practical machine.

A century before Sir Charles, James Watt had poured scorn on attempts to tame the high-speed jets of steam required to make a turbine work. Challenged on the threat to his steam-engine business from tur-

bines, he said: "Without God making it possible for things to move at 1,000 feet per second, it cannot do us much harm." As well as providing cheap electricity, the Parsons turbine took the world's navies by storm after an unauthorised demonstration in 1897. The 2,000hp launch *Turbinia* weaved around the warships at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Spithead review at 40mph, a then unprecedented speed. Turbines were soon the main propulsion for warships and appeared later in the *Mauritania* and the *Titanic*.

Parsons' history since the Second World War has been marked by tough competition that forced a series of mergers

ending with a takeover by Rolls-Royce, the aeroengineers, in 1989. The peak payroll in the Sixties of 12,000 had fallen to 5,300 in 1985 and continued to dwindle as the order book shrunk.

Rolls yesterday put a for-sale sign up after losses of £30m last year, but experts cast doubt on whether a buyer could be found.

Tom Brennan, of the Newcastle Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering unions, said: "It's a complete shock to all concerned, a total bolt from the blue. We're determined to keep Parsons alive on Tyneside. There's a real determination among the workforce for survival."

Business and City, page 18

### QUICKLY

**Muslim commission**  
Britain's one million Muslims will be protected from attacks in the media by a commission to be run by the Rumymede Trust, the independent think-tank on race relations. Page 5

**Pupil murdered**  
Pupils from Launceston College, Cornwall, were being questioned by police in Brittany yesterday in the search for leads after the rape and death of 13-year-old Caroline Dickinson (right) while on a school trip to Plaine-Fougères. Page 7

**Bomb suspicions**  
CNN said last night that the FBI would open a criminal investigation into the TWA jet crash in the Atlantic this week, which killed all on board. Page 9



13-year-old Caroline Dickinson (right) while on a school trip to Plaine-Fougères

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OBITUARIES	PROPERTY
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## news

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## SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

**Cambridge University** dons voted to accept a £1.5m donation from BAT Industries yesterday after a controversial debate that had split the University's academic elite. The donation from the company creates a professorship, the Sir Patrick Sheehy Professor of International Relations, named after the former chairman of BAT who retired last year.

Earlier this year, the General Board of the University and the University Council, the principal policy making body, recommended accepting the donation. Yesterday, 1,128 dons endorsed that recommendation by voting for the professorship, while 583 voted against.

**Labour** yesterday lodged an official protest at a "fawning" interview with John Major by Trevor MacDonald on ITN's 10 O'Clock News. It complained that Dame Sue Tinson, associate editor of ITN, and a close friend of Mr Major, had been involved in setting up the interview in the gardens of Number Ten and that the interview, screened on Thursday night, had taken precedence over the deaths of nearly 230 people in the TWA air crash. "First it's Dame Sue, and next it will be Sir Trevor," said one senior Labour source. "You would not have got an interview as fawning as that on Albanian TV." Colin Brown

**The head of the Scottish judiciary**, who has severely criticised the fixed jail penalties introduced by the Secretary of State for Scotland, Michael Forsyth, was yesterday moved from his post. Lord Hope of Craighead, 58, was made an appeal judge at the House of Lords and was replaced as president of the court of session in Scotland by Lord Rodger of Earlsferry, a former Solicitor General for Scotland in John Major's government. The introduction of fixed jail sentences for repeat offences was resisted in Scotland which has a separate legal system from England and Wales. Colin Brown

**An attempt to make a widow put up £2m security** before suing a tobacco giant for compensation failed yesterday. Lord Sutherland and two other judges at the Court of Session in Edinburgh rejected an appeal by Imperial Tobacco, clearing the way for widow Margaret McTear of Beith, Ayrshire, to take them to court. Mrs McTear's husband, Alfred, died three years ago from lung cancer, allegedly caused by smoking. His case against Imperial, now taken up by his widow, was that the company was aware cigarettes could be harmful long before warnings were carried on packets.

**New cervical smears for more than 500 women** have been offered because doctors are unsure about the results of their original tests, a hospital said yesterday. A further 32 women have been offered the chance to see a gynaecologist as a result of concerns about the accuracy of their smears, according to the James Paget Hospital in Gorleston, Norfolk. The hospital said last month that 8,200 cervical smears were being re-examined because of doubts about their accuracy. The tests date back to 1993 and affect women at 29 general practices in the area. A member of the hospital's screening staff has been suspended.

**An apology was made in the High Court** yesterday by Labour's chief campaign co-ordinator, Brian Wilson MP, and the party's top media spokesman, David Hill, for accusing in a press release a prospective Conservative election candidate of having "clear and undisputed links with the indicted Bosnian war criminal Radovan Karadzic". They agreed to pay "substantial" undisclosed libel damages and legal costs to John Kennedy, the Tory candidate for Halesowen and Rowley Regis.

## MPs complain of dirty tricks

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

A concerted effort by the Labour leadership to get Harriet Harman and the Shadow Cabinet re-elected without changes was threatening to blow up in a rancorous row last night.

Some Labour MPs said they had been urged by the whips not to vote for Ann Clwyd, one of

the main challengers, and others had been told to take next week off in return for casting proxy votes for the "status quo slate" on the Shadow Cabinet.

The claims also extended to pressure on possible candidates not to stand. One MP who was urged not to vote for Ms Clwyd, said: "I don't know why they are getting their knickers in a twist. I am going to vote for Harman, anyway. I think she will get re-

elected without this pressure."

The effort to enforce the campaign for no change was threatening to backfire on Tony Blair, the Labour leader, as MPs complained of "overkill" in the arm-twisting going on behind the scenes for next week's vote.

One possible challenger was said to have been warned that she could face reselection if she went ahead with a contest. Frontbench Labour MPs have

been left in no doubt that their jobs would be at risk if they threw their hats into the ring.

The refusal to countenance an open challenge for the Shadow Cabinet has baffled Labour backbenchers who believe that candidates who could improve Labour's appeal are being denied a chance. Highly regarded frontbenchers who are not standing include Derek Fatchett and Dawn Primarolo.

One senior backbench Labour MP confirmed that some whips were encouraging MPs to stay away in return for handing in ballot papers for proxies to cast their votes.

Labour MPs have been told in their weekly notice from the whips' office that they are on a three-line whip on the Housing Bill with votes from 4.30 pm on Monday. On Tuesday, there is a three-line whip on a debate on

the welfare state until 7 pm and a three-line whip on a debate on the voluntary sector until 10 pm.

The Labour leadership and some Scottish Labour MPs dismissed the allegations. Tommy Graham, the Labour MP for Renfrew West and Inverclyde, said, "It's a wind-up." He said he was "pained" but there was a long tradition for Scottish MPs to be allowed to pair during the school holidays in Scotland.

## Ultimatum over post monopoly

BARRIE CLEMENT  
Labour Editor

The permanent fragmentation of the postal system was in prospect last night after the Government threatened to suspend the Royal Mail's monopoly on delivering letters for up to four months unless strikes are called off.

The announcement could also resurrect calls for the privatisation of the whole system - a policy abandoned after a revolt among Conservative MPs.

As peace talks continued at the Department of Trade and Industry disclosed that private operators could be allowed to enter the market for an initial period of a month from next Friday when the Communication Workers' Union plans a serious escalation of industrial action.

Amid accusations that they were inflaming the dispute over "team-working", ministers proposed a suspension of three months if the disruption continued. Sources believe the Cabinet could come under considerable pressure from private operators and backbench MPs to lift the monopoly permanently allowing couriers to deliver letters for less than £1.

The monopoly was last suspended 25 years ago when postal workers went on strike for several weeks. Unlike the Royal Mail, the private sector

would have to charge 17.5 per cent VAT on letters under European law. Customs and Excise said however that most VAT-registered businesses using the service would be able to claim the tax back.

The political furor over the dispute continued with Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, urging shadow ministers to "come off the fence" and denounce the strikers, while Labour accused him of "playing politics" with the conflict.

The union has so far staged three 24-hour stoppages, the last on Thursday. The strike next Friday will last 36 hours, to be followed by a 48-hour walkout from 31 July and another day-long stoppage on 6 August.

Mr Lang said that if the union did not call off the action "Post Office employees will know that it's their bone-headed union which is responsible for the loss of the monopoly".

Alan Johnson, general secretary of the Communication Workers' Union, said he was astonished that the minister should make such a "provocative and inflammatory" decision.

At London Underground management said there was little point in the unions' suggestion that the drivers' dispute should be taken back to Acas. The unions plan eight further strikes up to 9 September in support of a one-hour reduction in the working week.



Warrior for hire: George Wright taking on his alias Geoffroi de Charnay, of the Carew Collegiate of Knights, who are based in Pembroke Dock, Dyfed, and modelled on the medieval Knights Templar. Photograph: Rob Stratton

## Benefits staff strike over privatisation

NICHOLAS TIMMINS  
Public Policy Editor

Staff at dozens of benefits offices across the country walked out yesterday as Peter Lilley confirmed that privatising the delivery of child benefit will be just the first step in handing over parts of the benefit delivery system to the private sector.

The changes will initially affect the 1,850 staff at the Washington centre in Tynes and Wear, but private sector consortia are also being invited to bid to

work in three of the Benefit Agency's 13 regions for a year - before being given the chance to run at least parts of the business themselves.

Further dramatic streamlining of the benefits process to achieve a 25 per cent efficiency increase with 20 per cent fewer staff means "greater involvement of the private sector", the Secretary of State for Social Security indicated.

Opposition and the unions reacted with fury to Mr Lilley's announcement. Chris Smith,

his Labour opposite number, said he feared the aim was to abolish a scheme which played a key part in the poorest families' finances. Mike King, national officer of the Public Services, Tax and Commerce Union, said staff at the centre were "livid", and industrial action could not be ruled out.

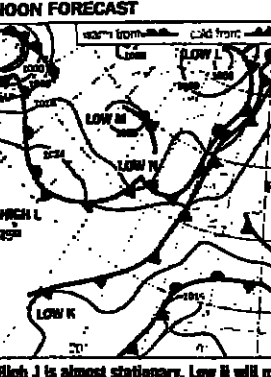
The unions speculated that computer giants EDS and Sema, lottery operators Camelot, and the ICL consortium which is developing the benefit payment card, could be

bidders. Mr Lilley insisted that the moves would make benefit delivery more efficient, contributing to the £900m he is seeking to release from his department's £3bn administration budget.

Liz Lynne, the Liberal Democrats' spokeswoman, protested that child benefit was already efficiently delivered. "If it isn't broken, don't fix it," she said.

## Weather forecast

## NOON FORECAST



High 1 is almost stationary. Low 2 will move north-east and deepen a little.

## WORLD WEATHER

London	12-14	Southerly	12-14	Cloudy
Birmingham	10-13	Southerly	10-13	Cloudy
Edinburgh	9-11	Westerly	11-13	Cloudy
Glasgow	8-10	Westerly	11-13	Cloudy
Newcastle	11-13	Southerly	11-13	Cloudy
Manchester	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Belfast	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Cardiff	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Sheffield	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Nottingham	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Leeds	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Liverpool	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Southampton	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Bristol	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Exeter	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Plymouth	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Truro	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
St. Ives	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Penzance	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Land's End	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Weymouth	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Bournemouth	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Portsmouth	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Southsea	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Haslemere	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Woking	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Guildford	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Windsor	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Slough	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Reading	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Westbury	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Salisbury	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Devizes	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Marlborough	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Chippenham	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Wootton Bassett	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Stratford-upon-Avon	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Warwick	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Leamington Spa	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Coventry	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Nuneaton	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Bedford	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
St. Albans	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Hemel Hempstead	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Tring	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Watlington	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Wotton Bassett	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Wotton-under-Edge	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Wotton	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
Wotton Bassett	10-12	Southerly	10-12	Cloudy
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## LIGHTNING-UP TIMES

Location	Time	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	21.05	12.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Birmingham	21.15	11.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Manchester	21.25	10.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Edinburgh	21.35	9.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Glasgow	21.45	8.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy

## HIGH TIMES

Location	Time	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	21.05	12.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Birmingham	21.15	11.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Manchester	21.25	10.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Edinburgh	21.35	9.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Glasgow	21.45	8.5	SW 10	Partly cloudy

## AIR QUALITY

Location	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	12-14	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Birmingham	11-13	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Manchester	10-12	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Edinburgh	9-11	SW 10	Partly cloudy
Glasgow	8-10	SW 10	Partly cloudy

## Independent Weatherline



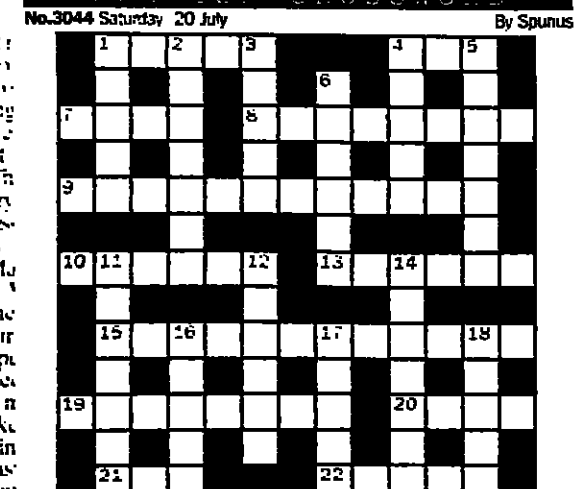
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- £67,500 - UK record for a Pembroke table
- £104,900 - World record for a Kern
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## No.3044 Saturday 20 July



- ACROSS**
- Garden ornament (5)
  - Admiration (3)
  - Speck of soot (4)
  - Scab (8)
  - Glowing with heat (12)
  - The East (6)
  - Determine (6)
  - Fairground attractions (7,5)
  - Without mercy (8)
  - Ceremony (4)
  - Writing point (3)
  - Support for canvas (5)
- DOWN**
- Urchin (5)
  - Scottish biscuit (7)
  - Plant firmly (5)
  - Joint (5)
  - Thrown out (7)
  - Elevated (6)
  - Noisy disturbance (7)
  - Kindling material (6)
  - Age groups (7)
  - Ascend (5)
  - Sample (5)
  - Praise (5)

**Solutions to yesterday's Concise Crossword:**  
ACROSS: 1 Beau, 4 Thais (Bow ties), 9 Rabbi, 10 Rotated, 11 Monocover, 12 Shun, 13 Roman Catholic, 17 Sick, 18 Keyboard, 21 Umbrae, 22 Tutor, 23 Elitist, 24 Tire.  
DOWN: 2 Ember, 3 Unicorn, 4 Three-day event, 5 Alto, 6 Satchel, 7 Tremor, 8 Eden, 14 Macabre, 15 Habitat, 16 Cedars, 17 Shunt, 19 Actor, 20 Wall.

## Notes



SHORTS

School's out, the bags are packed and Britain is off on its hols. Where we choose to go reveals something important about ourselves

# Holidays made in heaven ... and hell



**Ralph Steadman:** We've been on our holiday early this year - to Puglia, in the heel of Italy, in April. It's gorgeous, absolutely wonderful. We stayed in a 13th-century fortified farmhouse. I was fascinated by the idea of the heel and toe of Italy - you know, what's down there?



**Rose Tremaine:** We went to a little Ionian island called Paxos and had a shack in an olive grove. It's the greenest of the Greek islands. It's very small so we didn't have a car. Communication was severed - just what a writer needs.



**Ben Olvis:** I'll just get on a train and get away from so many things that have been troubling me. I'll travel across Europe, maybe end up by the fjords. I want to go right through France too; I want to ride bikes, read Plutarch, drink wine. At the moment, it seems just a dream.



**Jilly Cooper:** I'm getting myself into a new book, trying to work out the plot, so I don't think we'll have time to go on holiday. But Cassis, a small fishing village in the south of France, was our favourite place. That was where we went in 1961 after we got married.



**John McVicar:** [Inaudible growl] I'm going to the bloody Orkneys. Will Self has booked a big house. My dog is friends with his kids. I've never been there before and I won't be going there again. Nothing attracts me to the place, it's the bloody Orkneys isn't it.



**Henry Kelly:** We've been on holiday twice to the West of Ireland this year: Co Clare, Co Galway and Co Mayo. Connemara is marvellous too; but go in the next two years, before it's spoilt by the killer bungalow.

Interviews: Andrew O'Sullivan and Ben Surrans



Life's a beach: Cuba (left) is among the most fashionable destinations for sun-seeking trend-setters. Provence (right) is most definitely not on the itinerary of the style-conscious traveller

**SIMON CALDER**  
Travel Editor

With the end of term yesterday, the holiday Olympiad has truly left the starting block. About two million people will leave the country this weekend, and many more will travel within the UK. Cars will be choking the M5 to the West Country, while queues for Le Shuttle will back up for miles from the Channel Tunnel, and Gatwick will be bursting at the seams with the great charter flight exodus.

The world that we visit in such numbers is, as the illustration shows, a gross distortion of geography. Start in Britain, which is still our favourite destination by a mile. Among domestic tourists, England, Scotland and Wales are evenly matched, with the principality taking gold medal position. But Northern Ireland remains a

poor relation, the upsurge in violence having wiped out the tourist gains of 1995 - the first peaceful season for a quarter-century. Among British regions, the West Country is easily the favourite; one in six domestic tourists chooses to take a break in Devon or Cornwall.

Information about foreign holidays is infuriatingly imprecise. Neither the Government nor the Association of British Travel Agents will know the precise numbers for 1995 until November this year. In an industry where four operators are already trying to sell holidays for September next year, this statistical lag seems extraordinary. Yet from informed sources, it is possible to produce a map of the world from the package tourist's perspective.

Forget the bad press that Spain has received ever since the Costa Brava package tour

was invented 30 summers ago (28 guineas for 10 days, flying from Southend with Gaytours). Five million people will fly to Mallorca, Malaga and beyond. The Balearics, in particular, attract numbers far disproportionate to their size. The offer of keen prices and clean beaches seems infallible.

France is not faring nearly so

well. More than two million of us travel there on organised packages, and, in total, a staggering nine million made it across to France (many staggering under the weight of those duty-free). But the strong French franc has meant visitors are now trading down - camping rather than staying in a glit, taking the Eurostar train to

Paris for the day (£49 from Ashford), rather than flying to the French capital for a weekend.

Other destinations that are feeling the pinch are a couple of ex-colonial islands in the Mediterranean: Malta and Cyprus. Their pounds are much stronger than the puny British version, so local hoteliers are having a tough summer. Much

of the tourist trade has moved on to Turkey, one of the star performers this summer. Its tourism potential has hardly been touched so far - the gorgeous stretch of coast between Alanya and Adana holds hardly a hotel. But with low prices and a mass of charter flights, Britons will undoubtedly soon start encroaching here, on one of the Mediterranean's still unspoiled shores.

Those countries with borders on the Adriatic have had mixed fortunes. While Italy simmers along nicely, Greece is having another poor season. But that country's set-back is nothing compared with the catastrophe facing Croatia. This summer a few thousand brave souls may enjoy the Dalmatian coast, compared with more than half a million visitors in 1990. This figure places Croatia in the same league as the Scandinavian

nations, which have recently priced themselves out of the main body of the market.

Politics and money apart, a lot of countries are fretting about the fastest-growing sector of the travel industry: the cruise. The number of people who prefer a night on the ocean wave to an onshore hotel rose 40 per cent last year, and a similar increase is expected for 1996 when more mass-market ships come onstream.

The shrinking market for summer package holidays may also be a reflection of the resurgence of the British summer. As they enjoy a nationwide heat-wave this weekend, many families may conclude that the best move is to make the most of the clement climate on their doorstep - and, at the same time, save the cash for a good winter holiday somewhere trendier than Torremolinos.

## Trendsetters' guide to holidays

### A trendy trip around the world:

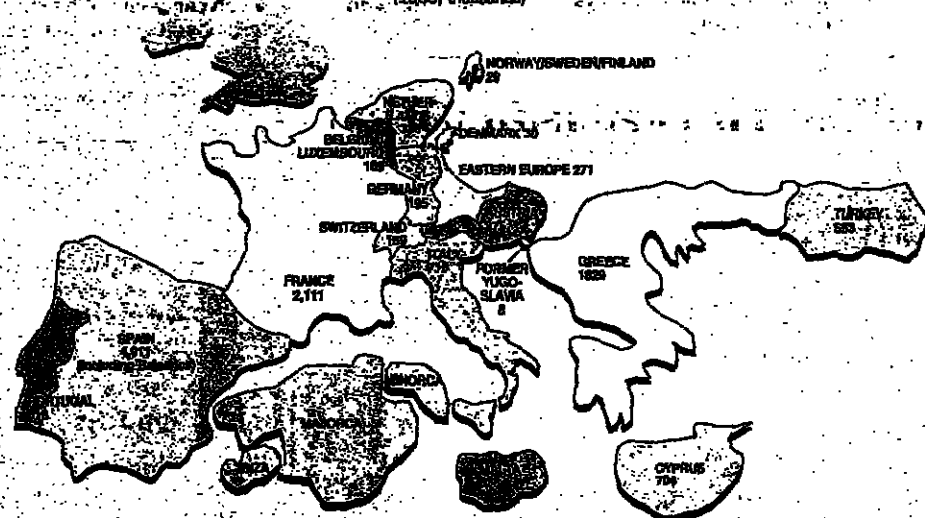
**Kaliningrad:** if the Baltic is truly the new Mediterranean, then this silver of Russian shore possesses its own Costa del Sol.  
**Iran:** one-time hippie truck-stop (see Weekend, page 19), now encouraging mainstream tourism.  
**Butan:** small country for big budgets.  
**Samoa:** forget the Edinburgh Fringe: the South Pacific Festival is the place to be in September.  
**Cuba:** the only place in the Western hemisphere where US tourists are notable by their absence.

### Passé places - and how to disparage them:

**Vietnam:** "You mean you didn't fly Aeroflot? When I was there, that was the only way in."  
**Lebanon:** "Of course, it was much cheaper when the Hizbollah were in charge."  
**El Salvador:** "It just doesn't seem the same without rifle-toting 14-year-olds everywhere."  
**Uganda:** "Much nicer with just the aid workers."  
**Burma:** just say "No". There is nothing to joke about in the first country to employ slavery to develop its tourism infrastructure.

## EUROPE REDRAWN

Size of country is proportional to the number of British package holidays there (1995, thousands)



## How to travel places and impress your friends

**GLENDIA COOPER**

Once, it was all so easy. Jump on a bus with Cliff Richard, sing a few songs, next stop Athens, and you were assured of the trendiest holiday of the year.

Now it's hard work impressing friends and neighbours. In the Nineties, Cliff would have to backpack along the Silk Route in central Asia or paraglide over a central African war zone to have any chance of getting hip young things to join him on a break.

Holidays are becoming more exotic as flights proliferate, resorts expand and the distant corners of the globe become cheaper. The first consumer travel guide to Antarctica will be in the shops in four months' time, and Somalia is opening up as a tourist venue.

"More and more people are wanting to travel to places that

are somehow 'off limits'," said Richard Trillo of the travel publishers Rough Guides.

The knack, however, is to recognise what is a passé destination. It must be worrying for students on their year off to south-east Asia when they find that serious travellers regard Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia as hopelessly Eighties.

Cambodia is still a good stamp to have on your passport but Vietnam is past its peak (after so many guilt-ridden 'Nam movies, maybe we feel we've seen it all before). Cuba, another old adversary of the US, stays in, as the last genuine Communist state.

The real hot spots are the ones it takes time and ingenuity to get to, such as the Silk Road, an ancient caravan route through central Asia established more than 2,000 years ago. For those who want even

more of a challenge, there is always Saudi Arabia, which does not allow tourists in. Travel gurus dream of being the first legitimate sightseer. Or the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, where the king personally controls the numbers coming into the country.

With the increasing availability of long-haul flights the furthest destination is no longer always the most chic, says Mr Trillo. "A holiday to the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean will now cost you about £100 less than going to parts of Greece."

Cost isn't everything, however. Nothing will save Richard Branson's island of Necker from the stigma of being unfashionable. Princess Diana, Steven Spielberg and Harrison Ford may have all been there, but so can anyone with more than £700 a day to spare.

## ... and to make a great escape

Falling to book the family holiday rates as a big domestic misdeed. But it does happen. Despite an apparent glut of opportunities - discounts on holidays of up to 15 per cent and, since 1995, package trips for £99, even at the height of summer - the market has shrunk. About one million package holidays have been taken off the travel agents' shelves, and at last supply is matching demand.

The travel trade's annual warnings about availability are, at least this year, not bluff. So what to do if you have left everything to the last minute? First, you might try television services such as Teletext. One

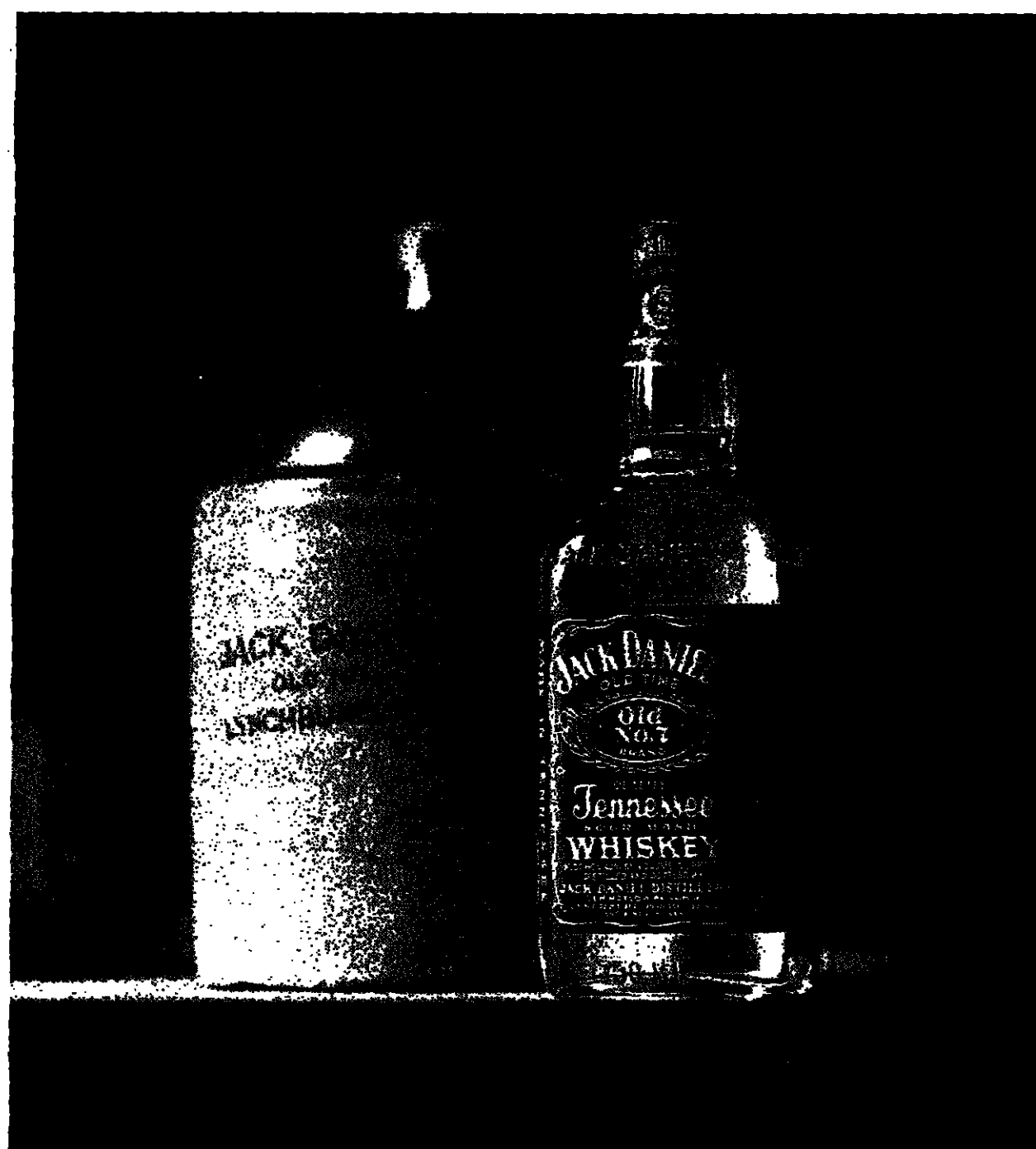
in seven holidays is now sold through such services and the prices are generally accurate. The Independent, meanwhile, offers its ideas based on interviews with operators. We asked for breaks for two adults with children aged 10 and 14.

**Blackpool:** A four-night break in Blackpool, staying at the Warwick Hotel on a half-board basis, costs £330.80.

**France:** Anyone travelling with carload of people shouldn't be paying more than £100 return between Dover and Calais, says Chris Perry, managing director of specialist agency, Channel One travel, offers a £79 open return with

SeaFrance. Try taking a caravan - on Stena Line, it will cost £98. **Canary Islands:** "Leave the children at home", advises Alan Cornish, director of Corona Holidays. "The best you can hope for is a one-bedroom, two-week deal, such as a fortnight at Los Cristianos Paloma Beach for £360."

**Australia:** Midwinter in Melbourne might not appeal, but long-haul discount specialist Quest Worldwide says the price on Emirates' new service from Gatwick is unbeatable - under £2,750 for going halfway around the world. From Manchester, one night (or longer) in Bangkok comes in at £1,556.



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

**Project in crisis:** Chris Green, chief executive of English Heritage, resigns after allegations of 'administrative irregularities'



**English Heritage: some facts**

- English Heritage is the Government's official adviser on historic buildings and sites and manages more than 400 properties.
- It receives an annual grant of £103m. In 1996, half of this will be spent on grants for restoring private buildings. The grant has been cut by £44.7m in the past four years.
- Its five most popular sites with visitors are:
  1. Stonehenge, Wiltshire
  2. Dover Castle, Kent
  3. Osborne House, Isle of Wight
  4. Tintagel Castle, Cornwall
  5. Battle Abbey, Sussex
- Of the 700,000 visitors to Stonehenge each year, the average visitor spends 20 minutes at the monument. Stonehenge is 5,000 years old.
- The chairman Jocelyn Stevens has caused controversy with plans to encourage the commercialisation of Stonehenge. He even suggested a McDonald's fast food outlet for the visitor centre.
- English Heritage has ambitious plans for the Tower of London, including the filling-in of the moat and diverting an adjacent five-lane road into a tunnel.

# Heritage row threatens Stonehenge plan

JONATHAN GLANCEY

English Heritage was yesterday thrown into crisis by the sudden resignation of its chief executive, at a time when the organisation's most ambitious project is at a crucial stage.

The departure of high-flyer Chris Green follows a clash with chairman Sir Jocelyn Stevens over alleged administrative irregularities.

The straight-backed and utterly self-confident Sir Jocelyn is currently trying to raise a total of £65m, half of it through private funding, to build the "Stonehenge Experience" visitors' centre, to open in 2000; it is expected to attract up to 1.5m visitors a year, compared to fewer than a million at present.

The smarmy up of Stonehenge is meant to be the crowning point of Sir Jocelyn's five dynamic years with English Heritage (EH). The last thing he needs, whilst trying to raise private funds, is any whiff of scandal.

The Stonehenge project is a metaphor for the changes

Stevens has rung in at EH, which previously saw its role as primarily defensive, a cautious guardian to the 400 historic sites and properties in its care. Charged with recommending buildings of historic and architectural interest for listing, it tended to speak out against new developments that threatened

to change the way the public views existing listed buildings.

After Stevens, EH has become a proactive organisation, seeking to list buildings dating from after 1945 and making plans that will fundamentally change our relationship with such ancient structures as Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall.

"English Heritage has undergone a sea change with Stevens at the helm", says Paul Finch, editor of the *Architect's Journal*. "It has refused to attack plans for a giant ferris wheel on London's South Bank or Sir Richard Rogers' scheme to roof over the South Bank Centre - or even Daniel Libeskind's con-

troversial extension proposed for the V & A. Its reactions to dramatic modern schemes like these used to be ... in with the old, out with the new."

Stevens' own passion for the grand statement has also encouraged him to reveal entertaining ideas for restoring the Albert Memorial. At a recent

dinner hosted by the *Architect's Journal*, Stevens confided that the statue of Prince Albert at the heart of the florid Gothic Revival memorial will be regilded. It was, apparently, until the First World War - when German spy plane pilots used the golden Prince Consort as an aiming point for

bombing raids. Like Oscar Wilde's "Happy Prince", Albert was stripped of his gold leaf. By the time Stevens has finished with him, millennial Albert will preside over a glittering monument complete with a visitors' centre in the forgotten vaults on which the memorial stands.

"Jocelyn makes a noise, en-

joys publicity and parties," says a colleague at English Heritage. "He has put the organisation on the map ... What he has not been able to do is to prevent the government from cutting EH funding and replacing these with money spent by the Heritage Lottery Fund."

Because many listed buildings in need of repair are owned by hard-pressed families, EH has a duty to them; now that its budget is being cut by about £10m a year it is unable to give effective help to minor buildings. Meanwhile the Heritage Lottery Fund, chaired by Lord Rothschild and commanding larger sums of money than EH, is forbidden to fund these privately owned properties.

Stevens, who is unlikely to want to stay at English Heritage when his term runs out in 18 months' time, has had a hit-and-miss relationship with the government. He is alleged to have said that one of the great heritage myths is that the Department of National Heritage has no strategy - something EH itself cannot be accused of.

## High-flyer with grand vision takes his first fall

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR



Stevens: Avoiding scandal

Chris Green's venture outside the rail industry to English Heritage has ended in the first failure of a glittering career which almost took him to the chairmanship of British Rail.

He was a career railwayman who joined British Railways as a management trainee in the mid-Sixties and his first major job was as head of Scotrail in the early Eighties. He created the corporate identity of Scotrail and was to do much the same at Network SouthEast, created out of the old Southern Region. It takes a lot for a rail man-

ager to become famous, but he became a well-known figure among commuters and rail passengers thanks to his strength of personality and his driving ambition to improve their lot. A colleague of that time said: "He was great fun to work with ... He had a vision of the future and took you with it."

He moved on to InterCity which became highly profitable, and was deeply disappointed that under privatisation it was to be split into half a dozen lines. Banned in a memo to all senior staff from the BR chairman, John Welsby, from speaking out against privatisation, he

moved back to Scotland to run Scotrail. But he was again critical of the privatisation because he wanted Scotrail's infrastructure and services to remain together, rather than being separated into Railtrack and an operating company.

Disillusioned by what was happening to the railways, he was headhunted by English Heritage where, surprisingly, he adopted a low-profile role, allowing Jocelyn Stevens, the chairman, to be its public face. Mr Green is leaving after allegations of "administrative irregularities" and another former colleague said: "He was one for

the grand vision and sometimes did not pay sufficient details to the nitty-gritty of exactly how much was being spent."

EH's loss may be the rail industry's gain. Steve Knight, news editor of *Rail* magazine said: "He was the best chairman BR never had ... There aren't many jobs that are big enough in the industry for Chris, but he may be tempted to go in with one of the groups bidding for the West Coast Main Line." The line needs £1bn of investment to become Britain's premier rail route and that is probably the only job that might tempt Mr Green back into the industry.



Green: Driving ambition

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# Media's twisted picture of Islam faces challenge

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES

Distorted attitudes towards Britain's Muslims, particularly in the media, are to be challenged by the first-ever investigation into "Islamophobia".

A Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, to be launched on Monday by the Runnymede Trust, the independent think-tank comprehensive attempt to address the concerns of the 1 million-plus Muslims living in Britain.

The initiative will also examine religious education, which the commission members believe could play a part in ensuring a better understanding of Islam, and the issue of state funding for Islamic schools.

The commission, which will report next summer, follows a study by the Runnymede Trust into anti-Semitism. It recommended a similar body be set up to examine prejudice against Muslims.

The move coincides with growing concerns among senior Muslims that they are viewed as extremist, because of events in other countries and antagonistic media coverage.

The new commission will be chaired by Professor Gordon Conway, vice-chancellor of the University of Sussex, who said yesterday that prejudice against Muslims was widespread. "When you start to look at the issues, particularly the attitude

of the media, at what is said, particularly in newspapers, you begin to see the extent to which there is considerable anti-Muslim sentiment. In the tabloids it is vicious and rabid. In other papers it is often more subtle.

"If you look carefully, you see the ways, often insidious, in which British Muslims are being betrayed."

Citing the Oklahoma bombing, which some tabloid newspapers swiftly, and wrongly, attributed to Muslims, Prof Conway said the press reinforced a simplistic view of Islam. But this revulsion against religious fundamentalism failed to acknowledge Islam's diversity. "Fundamentalist Christianity is also pretty extreme," he added. "The violence in Northern Ireland could be viewed as being between two branches of Christianity."

Prof Conway said that in some instances abuse appeared to be religious in motivation, such as the recent spate of incidents in Birmingham, where pigs' heads were thrown into Muslim families' front gardens.

The other strand of prejudice seemed to be clearly racial, as evidenced by the abuse suffered by south Asians and the use of the description "Pakistani", regardless of a person's origins. "We want to know the extent to which violence is racial, or against a religion," Prof Conway said.

The 14 other members of the

commission include Zaki Badawi, principal of the Muslim College, the Bishop of London, the Rt Rev Richard Chartres, Ian Hargreaves, editor of the *New Statesman*, Rabbi Julia Neuberger and the trust chairman and broadcaster Trevor Phillips.

Next year's report will make recommendations to the media and the political parties. "There are no Muslims in the House of Commons or House of Lords, and while older Muslims are active in local government younger Muslims are becoming disenchanted," Prof Conway said. The aim is to enable Muslims to participate fully in the economic, social and public life of the country.

Churches prepare their bells for biggest peal ever ... on New Year's Eve 1999



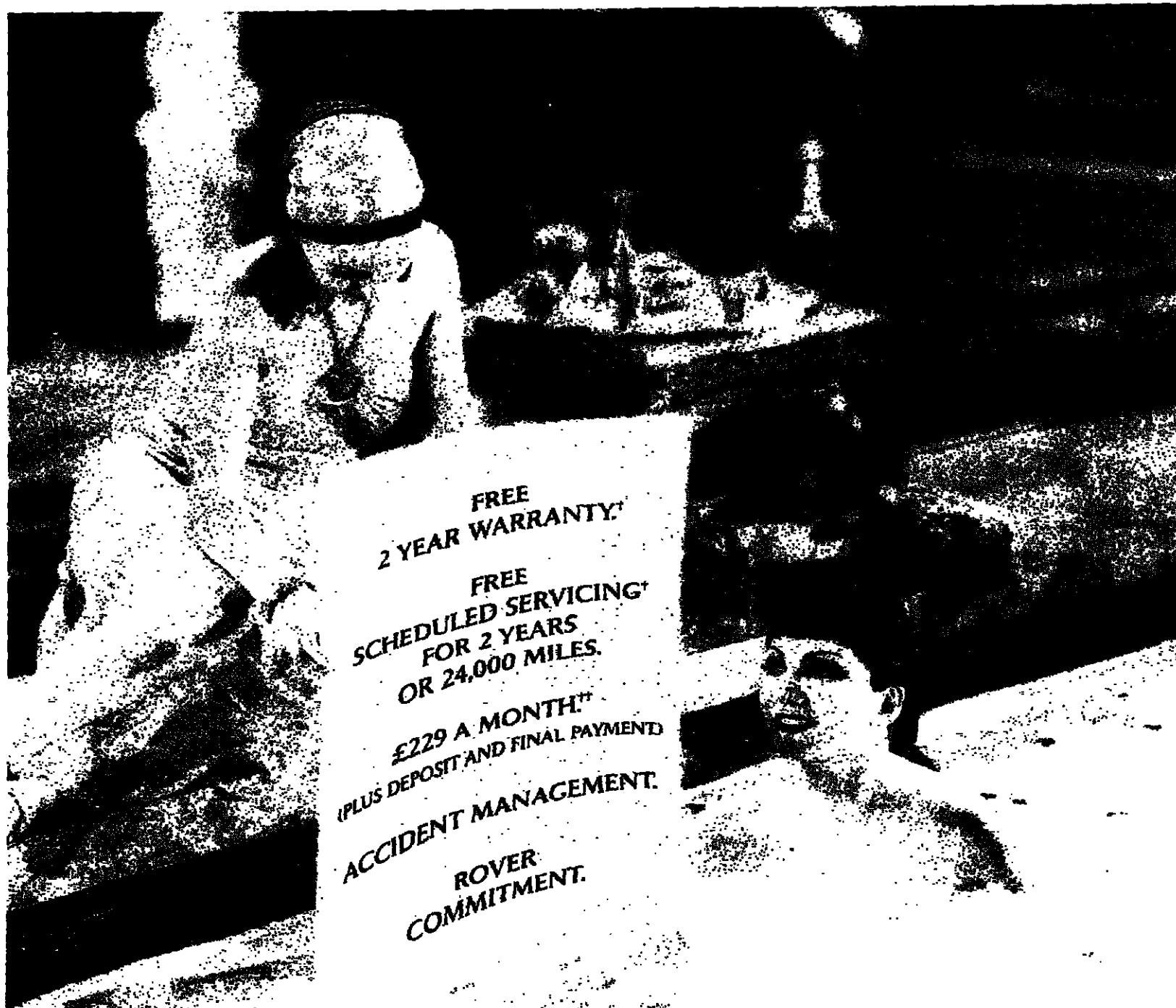
Ring in the new: The Rev Robert Gage outside St Margaret's church in St Albans, Hertfordshire, where he is appealing for funds for the Ridge Bell Fund which aims to restore the church's bells to full ringing order before the turn of the millennium. Photograph: Keith Dobney

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## Murdered girl's father supports register plans

The parents of Sophie Hook, whose killer Howard Hughes was jailed for life on Thursday, have backed the Home Office's proposals for a paedophile register.

Hughes was given three life sentences for abducting their daughter from a tent in her uncle's garden and raping her twice before strangling her and throwing her body into the sea. The couple, from Great Budworth, Cheshire, were speaking publicly for the first time since he was sentenced at Chester Crown Court.

Chris Hook, 38, who heard police say after the trial that they had "kept a close eye on" Hughes for 16 years, said he felt strongly that the proposals for a paedophile register should be put in place and advocated displaying posters of offenders in their home towns.

He also said that, in Hughes' case, life must mean life.

"An innocent life, Sophie's, has been destroyed. We are left with a life sentence ourselves."

The Hooks felt no sense of victory at seeing Sophie's killer finally behind bars.

Mr Hook, an advertising executive, said the verdict was "what we expected" but he blamed a failure in the system for not identifying earlier that Hughes, a known paedophile, was a potential killer. Hughes had also been accused of assaulting several young girls in the three years preceding his attack on Sophie.

He said: "I firmly believe that the Home Secretary's proposals that are going through currently should be extended."

"Allowing the authorities to display posters of offenders within the community is one

possible step forward." Mr Hook, 38, added: "Several months after it happened I was told that Hughes was basically a time bomb waiting to go off."

"The unfortunate thing for us, and particularly for Sophie, was that she was the trigger for that time bomb and it didn't need to be like that."

He said he and his wife, Julie, 35, were constantly asking themselves the question: "Why Sophie? Why us?"

Sophie's mother spoke movingly about the daughter she had lost. "Sophie enriched all our lives," she said. "She was bright, vivacious, full of fun, extremely caring and very loving. This is how we remember her."

Her elder sister Jemma, 10, her brother Joseph, six, and infant sister Ellie all missed her, Mrs Hook said.

"Naturally, all the children have been affected by the loss of Sophie, each in their own different way. They are, however, all able to talk freely about Sophie and continue to include her in whatever they do."

She said the children would say things to her such as "Sophie would choose this colour, Mummy", or "these are Sophie's favourite biscuits, Mummy", or "Do you think Sophie would like my new shoes?"

Asked how her family had coped with their loss, she said: "The deep pain and grief we have felt and will continue to feel is, quite honestly, beyond words."

"We have somehow coped because we have every reason to believe that Sophie never knew of her suffering."

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**School trip tragedies:** The children were in good hands, but they still met with injury and death

## Smothered and raped – on a school trip

LOUISE JURY

French detectives were last night questioning the fellow pupils and teachers of a 13-year-old British schoolgirl who was raped and murdered in her hotel bed on a school visit to Brittany. Caroline Dickinson was found dead on Thursday morning in the first-floor dormitory she was sharing with four other pupils from Launceston College, Cornwall.

As French police began interviewing members of the party of 40 children and five adults, a counselling service was set up for other pupils, staff and parents back in Britain.

Members of the school party were expected back from Pleine-Fougères in Brittany, France, today but they may have to stay while police make inquiries. Police Commandant Benoit from St Malo said nobody had been arrested and there were no suspects as yet.

Ronald Frankel, the honorary consul for Brittany, yesterday described the moment when the death was discovered. "One of the girls touched Caroline in her bed and she was cold. There was also some discoloration," he said.

The girl immediately told the others and then found a teacher in a neighbouring room. The teacher cleared the teenagers out of the dormitory and then raised the alarm. A doctor and ambulance crew arrived but were unable to resuscitate Caroline.

The French examining magistrate in charge of the investigation said yesterday that a post-mortem examination showed that Caroline, who was dressed in pyjamas, had been raped and suffocated.

Mr Frankel said the girl's family, who arrived in France yesterday, were devastated.

"This is a terrible tragedy as anyone can imagine."

The other children – 34 girls and five boys – initially were not told of Caroline's death, although some must have feared the worst, Mr Frankel said.

Speaking at Launceston College, Caroline's head teacher Alan Wroath said she had been a lovely girl. "She worked hard, had lots of friends and always a ready smile. She was quiet and gentle, a credit to the college."

The school has enjoyed educational trips to Normandy for many years, he said. "We believe that the opportunity to travel and to stay abroad is a particularly valuable educational experience."

The youth hostel in Pleine-Fougères near Mont St Michel in north-western France, was in a very quiet area away from towns. Mr Wroath added: "The staff on this trip are experienced and dedicated professionals who have my total support. There were five teachers there as well as a driver and one teacher's wife, who was a qualified nurse."

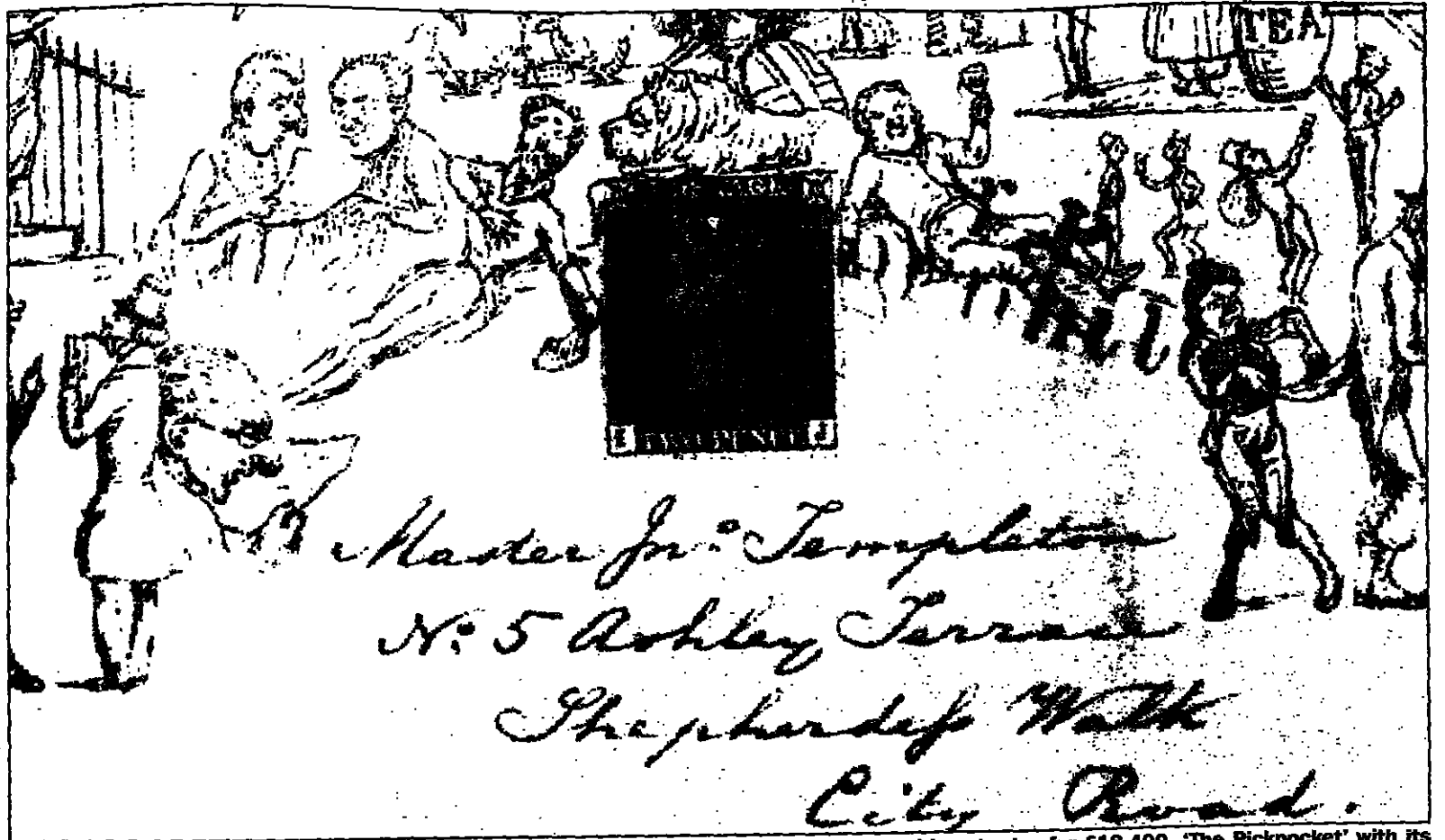
Cornwall county council described Launceston College, a comprehensive with about 1,000 pupils including sixth-formers, as a "close-knit" school. It had several activity trips planned this week.

Caroline was in a party which left by coach last Sunday to travel to France for a week's stay in Brittany. The plans for the week included visiting the sights of St Malo, Bayeux and Mont St Michel, as well as sampling French food and practising the language.

French police have previously come under fire in their investigations of cases where Britons have been murdered in the country. Joanna Parish, 20, a language student from Newnham, Lancashire, was sexually

assaulted and strangled in 1991, during a year spent teaching English in Auxerre. Detectives believe her killer answered her advertisement in a local newspaper, offering English lessons. So far no one has been charged with her murder.

In September 1986, Lorraine Ghosby and Paul Bellion, from East Anglia, were killed while cycling in Brittany. They were found bound, gagged and shot in the back. Their bodies were dumped in a field. Although there was a suspect, no charges were ever brought.



Victorian whimsy: The only known example of a 2d blue on an illustrated envelope was sold yesterday for £18,400. "The Pickpocket" with its rarity, franked 1840, was part of a collection of such envelopes in Sotheby's Postage Stamps of the World auction. Photograph: Edward Sykes

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## Bus driver who hit bridge 'ignored sign'

MICHAEL STREETER

The driver of a double-decker bus full of school children, which crashed into a low bridge had disobeyed a road sign and was travelling in a restricted area without a permit, council officials claimed yesterday.

More than 50 people, mostly children, were injured, some seriously, when the pedestrian bridge ripped the roof off the vehicle as it returned from a trip to a theme park.

Some of the pupils, from the Palace Fields Primary School in Runcorn, Cheshire, said they shouted desperate warnings to the driver as the bus headed towards the bridge. Ryan McGibbon, 10, said: "Everyone was shouting that he was going the wrong way, but he said no, it was a short cut."

He recalled that the deputy head, Craig Hinkins, said: "Look, children, doesn't this bridge look low. Are we going to hit it?" Ryan added: "Mr Hinkins just grabbed everyone and got them on the floor. The roof just caved in on everybody."

Thursday evening's incident, which yesterday brought calls for tougher rules on signposting bridge and vehicle heights, was being investigated by Cheshire County Council, which said the vehicle, owned by Dobson's Buses from Northwich, had been on a route designed only for single-deckers providing local services, which had to be registered. The driver had "almost certainly" ignored this rule, had driven through a no-right-turn sign and did not observe a low bridge sign, said a spokesman.

The county engineer, Peter Cocker, added: "One-off operators, tour companies and occasional users ... are banned from the route."

A spokesman for Dobson's Buses said that on 15 June another double-decker, owned by a different firm, had hit a bridge nearby in similar circumstances, and that in the last 10 years there had been 20 such incidents on the route. "Obviously there is a failing – and I would say a failure in warning signs."

The Department of Transport said that there are up to 700



A crash victim, Michael McCrumish, in hospital

"bridge-bashing" incidents a year, mostly involving lorries, at a cost of £5m.

Earlier this week, in Redruth, Cornwall, 12 people were injured when a double-decker hit a railway bridge; and in 1994 three Guides and two Guide leaders died when their bus hit a bridge in Glasgow.

Currently all low bridges require warning signs but only certain vehicles over 10 ft, such as skip lorries, must have in-cab signs giving their height.

Bob Stacey, technical manager of the Road Haulage Association, said they supported moves to make such signs compulsory for all vehicles over three metres high, including buses, displaying their "traveling height". The Government has been "dragging its feet" for two years over introducing new rules because of problems of enforcement, he said.

In the Runcorn incident the bridge displayed a 11ft 9in sign, and the bus had a notice giving its height as 13ft 8in.

Parents at the school complained that there were no signs warning that double-deckers could not use the route.

Six people, including one adult, were detained in Warrington General Hospital, among them a child with a fractured cheek and another with "serious" cuts.

Police said that the driver, a man in his 40s from Northwich, was still in shock and would be interviewed today.

## news

# The treatment worked but the end was horrible – in a wheelchair, unable to talk and unable to feed himself

**Patricia Wynn Davies** charts the anguish visited on one family by the progress of CJD

Noel and Janet Baldwin first took their son Patrick to their local doctor in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, when he was 18 months old.

"He didn't seem to be growing a lot, as he should have been," Noel remembers. After several inconclusive medical opinions, Patrick's school doctor referred him to Sheffield Children's Hospital. Aged nearly 14, he measured 4ft 8in.

Noel says he and Janet had more or less forgotten about their son's height. He had no problems and was a happy, active boy. He had treatment until he was nearly 18.

Noel concedes: "The treatment was good. He grew about eight inches." He was asked a similar question by the Government's counsel during the trial. He couldn't deny that he grew. "But the treatment made him die at a young age, leaving two children," Noel replied.

Fit, strong and a keen sportsman, he joined the Royal Navy, like his two brothers. The first sign of the terrible death that was approaching came in the summer of 1991, when he returned from sea to his home in Portsmouth with a bad cough.

By late October the awful truth was beginning to emerge. One of Patrick's brothers rang



Noel and Janet Baldwin and their son, Patrick: 'It is a death that you just cannot describe'

Photograph: Joan Russell/Guzzell

to say something was seriously wrong. Noel and Janet set off for Portsmouth at 4am. "He was unbalanced," Noel recalls. "He had to walk by the wall or by

furniture to keep himself up. He had a patch over one eye because he had double vision. He still had this horrible cough."

He was attending the Royal Naval Hospital, but because he had CJD, the tests were all negative. By then divorced, he went to his brother's home in nearby Havant to be cared for.

"Patrick's sole ambition was that he was going to beat it," Noel says. But he declined steadily. By Christmas he was in a wheelchair. Noel and Janet

took him home in February the following year. CJD does not show up in blood tests or X-rays, but by now there was no other explanation. He was 30. His

speech was becoming blurred and his hands and head shook. Feeding became a problem. Loss of bowel control followed, and eventually a catheter and

nappies. Janet and Noel sometimes changed the nappies four times in an hour. Luckily they had a downstairs bathroom.

"His mother had to drop his trousers and wash him – a 30-year-old. There was such embarrassment for him. The end is horrible. The sheer embarrassment used to bring stress on. But he never broke down."

They carried on as normal a family life as possible for as long as they could, with trips to football and the country in the wheelchair. But they were on the alert constantly for problems. Patrick biting into a glass, for example.

He recovered from a serious fever in May, but his speech went completely. "When his daughters came on the phone from Portsmouth you could see the stress," Noel remembers. The doctor gave him four hours to live during the fever. Instead, he suffered for six months, in which he was given round-the-clock care by Janet and Malcolm, was fed by tube and eased by morphine. He communicated with a nod or shake of the head or, latterly, a blink.

"It's a death you can't describe," Noel says. "It might take half an hour for him to respond with a blink." He slept with his eyes open for two months before he died. Miraculously, when they found him dead one December morning, his eyes were closed. "I felt a great ease for Patrick," Noel says. "I could say I was pleased. The embarrassment he had suffered; what he's gone through."

## Hormone drugs hid the deadly disease

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES

Human growth hormone was once hailed as the miracle cure for abnormally small children who faced a life of ridicule – and it produced some astonishingly good results.

But for some patients there was a fatal downside, the ticking time bomb of the agent for Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) that was present in the hormone they received. Sixteen lives have so far been lost, and three more people involved in yesterday's legal action have contracted the disease. A further 200 of the "worried well" – those who fear they might contract it – have cases pending or about to be launched. The final tally of claimants might run into hundreds.

CJD, a neurological condition similar to scrapie in sheep and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle (though yesterday's cases have nothing to do with "mad cow" disease) has a lengthy incubation period.

Forty-two years is the longest recorded, 50 is quite common – but once it has attacked the brain it is incurable, and fatal.

The natural incidence of CJD in the UK is very low. It is thought that it causes only one death per million of the population a year, compared with 1 per 100 among the human growth hormone (hGH) programme patients.

In order to collect enough hGH to restore normal growth patterns to the children, large numbers of human pituitary glands – tiny organs at the base of the brain – were routinely collected from corpses in hospitals and mortuaries from 1959 to the end of the programme in 1985.

The first death from CJD of a participant in the hGH programme was of Alison Lay, 22, in February 1985. She had received the treatment between nine and 13. By then almost 2,000 children in the programme had been injected with hGH.

Abruptly in May 1985, and without explanation, the pro-

gramme was withdrawn. The Department of Health decided that since there was no means of detecting CJD and no cure, it would cause unnecessary panic to go into the reasons why. A synthetic version of hGH was soon introduced.

The first sign to victims' families that there might have been a price to pay for their children's miraculous progress came in a letter from the Institute of Child Health in 1992 warning former patients not to donate blood or organs.

The only established criterion for the selection of pituitaries appears to have been that they should not come from the site of a primary disease. But there was no established inspection system – while mortuary attendants were paid a fee for every pituitary extracted.

Because batches of pituitaries were "pooled" the risk of the CJD agent reaching large numbers of patients was spread, helping to create the medical disaster that was waiting to happen.

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international

# Breakthrough as Karadzic steps down

If genuine, Radovan Karadzic's resignation yesterday as leader of the Bosnian Serbs is the most important political breakthrough since last year's Dayton accords ended the 1992-95 war. Yet Bosnia's *de facto* partition is already so far advanced, and nationalist attitudes are so entrenched among Serbs, Croats and Muslims alike, that his removal cannot alone guarantee the state's restoration in the multi-national, united form set out at Dayton.

By forcing Mr Karadzic to quit as Bosnian Serb President and head of the ruling Serb Democratic Party (SDS), the special US envoy Richard Holbrooke ensured that Bosnia's first post-war elections on 14 September stand a better chance of success than if Mr Karadzic had stayed.

There is little risk now of a boycott by the Muslim Party of Democratic Action (SDA), which had threatened to pull out unless Mr Karadzic left office. On the other hand, with their leader forced out by foreign pressure, Mr Karadzic's SDS colleagues may declare an election boycott in Republika Srpska, the 49 per cent of Bosnia under Serb rule.

It is likely that a majority of Bosnian Serb voters would heed the command and stay at home. If the SDS decides to take part,

But the Serb leader might retain some power. By Tony Barber, Europe Editor

the elections will almost certainly result in a substantial victory for the ruling party, which controls the police, media, bureaucracy and most of what economic life survives in Republika Srpska.

Like Mr Karadzic's successors as acting president and SDS leader, Biljana Plavsic and Aleksa Buha, most deputies elected in September would espouse nationalist views. Few Bosnian Serb politicians have questioned Mr Karadzic's vision of Bosnia as a place where Serbs are permanently separated from Muslims and Croats, living in a sovereign Republika Srpska that eventually unites with Serbia.

Furthermore, it is not yet clear that Mr Karadzic has been stripped of all political influence. Although Nato forces have pinned him down in Pale, the Bosnian Serb headquarters outside Sarajevo, he is still free to plot strategy with other SDS leaders.

Ejup Ganic, the Vice-President of the Muslim-Croat federation, which occupies 51 per cent of Bosnia, said: "I don't doubt that Karadzic will continue in his old way, creating a parallel system and obstructing



The pledge: Richard Holbrooke yesterday with the document in which Radovan Karadzic ceded his powers

Photograph: AP

## Four ways to bring a man to justice

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY  
Defence Correspondent

"We could get him any time we want. But what's the point?" highly-placed military sources told the *Independent* yesterday.

The Dayton accord, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and a large body of public opinion abroad all demand that Radovan Karadzic be brought to trial in the Hague. But military commanders on the spot, wary of inflaming the Serb population, prefer *realpolitik*.

A fortnight ago Admiral Leighton Smith, the commander of the peace force in Bosnia for its first six months, said he would have been happy to have ordered his forces to grab the indicted war criminals if he had received orders to do so from Nato's North Atlantic Council.

His orders, which may also be those of his successor, Admiral Joe Lopez, were to capture the men if I-For patrols chanced upon them. But now that Mr Karadzic has relinquished his powers as President of the Bosnian Serb mini-state, the Republika Srpska, and has said he will withdraw immediately and permanently from all political activities, I-For commanders believe that there is less need to carry out a "snatch" operation.

Mr Karadzic's withdrawal from political life, however, makes it less likely that I-For troops will stumble across him accidentally.

There are four main options to "get Karadzic". The first, the option which is being pursued by Western diplomats, is to encourage the local Serbian authorities to hand him over.

The International Tribunal wrote to the president of the UN Security Council, Alain Dejammet, last week, informing him of the issue of international arrest warrants for Mr Karadzic and his military colleague, General Ratko Mladic.

It stressed that "the failure to execute the initial arrest warrants... was wholly due to the

refusal of the Republika Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to co-operate with the tribunal". The International Criminal Tribunal asked the Security Council to "decide on the appropriate response" and suggested that intervention by I-For might be an option.

But pressure on the Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic, who was instrumental in getting Mr Karadzic to stand down, appears to be working.

Diplomatic sources yesterday said they were hopeful that now Mr Karadzic had been sidelined, other forces in Republika Srpska, or in Serbia proper, would seize him and hand him over.

The second option is to pen Mr Karadzic into the Bosnian Serb "capital" of Pale, the former ski resort south-east of Sarajevo. The plan is that he would be unable to move outside the town without fear of running into Nato patrols.

Admiral Smith said his troops were "fanning out" through the countryside and were patrolling in Pale itself, even though no I-For troops are based there. The effect of this has been to box Mr Karadzic and General Mladic into Pale.

That was the option which the US used successfully with the Panamanian dictator and supporter of drug traffic, General Noriega, and which ultimately led to his capture.

Option three is a military assault to capture Mr Karadzic, comparable to that launched to arrest General Mohamed Farah Aided in Somalia in 1993. But that US operation was bungled. It resulted in crossing what General Sir Michael Rose, the former UN commander in Bosnia, called the "Mogadishu line" between peace-keeping and enforcement. Such an operation in Bosnia might have a similar result.

Admiral Smith said surveys carried out by his officials showed Mr Karadzic and General Mladic still enjoyed the overwhelming support of the Bosnian Serb population.

Therefore, any attempt to seize them by force might trigger opposition from local Serbs. While I-For is authorised to overpower and destroy any Bosnian Serb military opposition, it would be difficult to deal with organised protests by women and children.

Pale lies in the sector of Bosnia which is in the Italian brigade area. An Aided-style operation might appeal to the Americans but it probably would not to the Italians.

A large-scale military attack on Pale would undoubtedly be resisted and could give rise to heavy loss of civilian life.

The fourth option would minimise the risk to bystanders. Known as the "Israeli" option, it would involve a small snatch squad of elite special forces troops, probably provided by the British SAS and US Special Forces, kidnapping Mr Karadzic and General Mladic, possibly drugging them before spiriting them out. Such an operation would be risky, however, as General Mladic and Mr Karadzic have more than half a dozen bodyguards each.

"There is of course a small option," an I-For military source said yesterday. "He gives himself up, says 'I am innocent and I will prove it' and takes himself to the Hague voluntarily." But nobody believes that is very likely.



Partners in crime: Mr Karadzic and General Mladic at a Bosnian Serb assembly in Pale

Photograph: AP

## French rail chief resigns over fraud case

MARY DEJEVSKY  
Paris

The head of the French national railway company, Loik Le Floch-Prigent, resigned yesterday, two weeks after being remanded in custody in connection with a corruption case.

Mr Le Floch-Prigent's resignation came less than 24 hours after a Paris judge had turned down his lawyer's latest application for his release, saying that it could prejudice the inquiry.

The French government had earlier made known that Mr Le Floch-Prigent's continued detention would make it impossible for him to keep his job as

chairman of the railway company, SNCF, although it also stressed that "everyone is innocent until proved guilty". The railway chief's replacement at SNCF is expected to be named after next Wednesday's cabinet meeting.

While Mr Le Floch-Prigent's decision to resign means the government no longer has to agonise over whether to dismiss him, it leaves two major problems. The first is the tangle of practice and principle in which ministers have been caught up since Mr Le Floch-Prigent was first called in for questioning. The second is the problem of finding a replacement.

According to reports circulating in Paris, the government of Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, was well aware that Mr Le Floch-Prigent might face legal difficulties when it appointed him last December, but decided that his managerial skills and known left-wing leanings made him the ideal candidate to restore SNCF's ailing finances and ease reform past disgruntled railway staff.

The earlier arrest of a close business associate and personal friend of his, however - the former head of the Bidermann textile company - made it likely that Mr Le Floch-Prigent, too, could face charges. He was

head of the French state oil company, Elf Aquitaine, in the late 1980s, when large sums of Elf money were used in a vain attempt to shore up Bidermann. The case against Mr Le Floch-Prigent, which was formally opened on 4 July, relates to charges of false accounting, misrepresentation, and misuse of public funds.

Mr Juppé's response to the opening of the investigation was to express full confidence in Mr Le Floch-Prigent and insist on the principle of "innocent until proved guilty". Now, though, Mr Juppé is caught on a hook: although Mr Le Floch-Prigent has to be considered innocent until proven guilty, his detention means he cannot do his job, so the government has to find someone else anyway. Which is the second problem.

Mr Le Floch-Prigent's success in obtaining more government money for the railways and persuading the trade unions to accept - albeit with reluctance - his restructuring plan, endeared him to the government, which wanted him to see the plan through.

Now, someone else - according to the transport minister, Bernard Pons, "with a profile similar to that of Mr Le Floch-Prigent" - must be found, and fast.

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# This is an appalling story. Please don't read it unless you're willing to help.

Shells were falling in Kabul. It was bitterly cold and there was little food. A young woman lived on her own with her three small children. The eldest was nine and the youngest was two. Their father had been killed in a bomb attack. The children were very hungry. During a lull in the bombardment, the woman left her home to find some food.



Amnesty International working worldwide for the release of prisoners of conscience, fair trials for political prisoners and an end to torture, extra-judicial executions, "disappearances" and the death penalty.

She knew the city was dangerous, but her children's hunger over-rode her fears. Before leaving her house she carefully locked the door, so that the children would at least have the protection of a strong plank of wood between them and danger.

The woman had not gone far when she was stopped by two men dressed as guards. She explained that her children were starving, but they didn't want to hear. They told her she was under arrest and took her to a house full of men in dirty uniforms.

One by one, the men raped her. She was raped by twenty two men. It took three days. At last she was allowed to go. The woman ran into the street and all the way home. The door was still locked.

Opening it, she found that her three children had died of hypothermia.

## Remember Afghanistan?

No-one else does. It's a place the world's leaders have forgotten, or chosen to ignore. For years a battleground of international power politics, it is now caught in a vicious civil war.

Two generations of children in Afghanistan have never known peace. Violence and death have become so much part of existence that even the rugs of Afghan nomads are woven with strange designs: Kalashnikov rifles, tanks and helicopter gunships.

In the towns, armed bands struggle to fill the vacuum left by the departed Russians. It is the most lawless territory on earth. The gangs bombard and kill each other with complete disdain for innocent civilians caught in the crossfire.

Foreign governments have lined up to offer covert political and military aid to the various factions, and none seem to care that the groups they support are terrorizing defenceless men, women and children.

In Afghanistan such terrible things are happening that we at Amnesty International, who should be used to reports of horror and inhumanity, are numb.

When our researchers went to the country, these were some of the stories they heard.

## "They said they'd force me to eat human flesh."

A taxi driver taking a woman passenger through Kabul was stopped by an armed gang. They ordered him to sign a paper saying he had sold his car to them.

When he refused they said they would force feed him human flesh. After a beating, he signed. But they did not let him go. They brought some cooked meat and forced him and the woman to eat. The driver ate a small piece and felt sick. Next his captors demanded that he sign another paper, stating that the woman passenger was his sister and that he had sold her to them for a certain sum of Afghani.

The taxi driver refused and was beaten again. At last the two prisoners were told they could go. The driver had started down the stairs when he heard a noise behind him. He turned, and saw that the woman was no longer there.



Refugee children await medical treatment. Thousands have been killed in the fighting.

## "He had taught girls at the village school".

A woman described to Amnesty International how her four small children saw their father killed.

He was a schoolteacher. Mujahideen guards came to their house. They confronted him with the fact that he taught girls at the village school. (Some Mujahideen think that women should not go to school.)

The gunmen began beating the teacher. His wife and children shouted for mercy, but they would not stop. At last one of them unslung his Kalashnikov, stood back and shot the teacher in the heart.

## "I cannot describe what they did to me."

A 15 year old girl who had committed the crime of going to school told us what happened when a gang of armed men came to her house one night.

"They shot my father right in front of me. He was a shopkeeper. It was nine o'clock at night. They came to our house and told him they had orders to kill him because he had allowed me to go to school. The Mujahideen had already stopped me from going to school, but that was not enough. They then came and killed my father. I cannot describe what they did to me after killing my father."

## They have one last and only hope.

Did you go to school? When was the last time you left your house to buy some food? Do you worry about taking a taxi by yourself?

Imagine, for a moment, swapping lives with people in Afghanistan. How long could you endure the terror?

Wouldn't you desperately pray for help? Help from anywhere, from anyone?

Do you want to know the really frightening truth?

These people's last and only hope is you.

Governments don't want to know. There's only you and the only realistic way you can make a difference is by joining with thousands of other people who feel the same way. Please join Amnesty International.

With enough support, we can help to stop the killings and rapes. We will know we have enough support when they stop.

Amnesty International will never give up.

With your support we will continue to investigate, publicise and campaign to stop the atrocities that are happening in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

You, as a free human being, have at this moment the simple choice of whether or not to help us.

If you want to help, join Amnesty International today. Whether you join us, or make a donation, your support is valuable and deeply welcome.

## There is nothing left to say.

If you are going to turn the page, if these people's stories do not move you, if you can't find it in you to help - then there is nothing more to say.

The woman who lost her children is now insane. The fifteen year old who was daring enough to go to school cannot speak about her ordeal.

They have no words to implore you.

Neither have we. We have run out of words to describe pain and grief. The rest of this page is for you. Use it to write down your reasons for reading these stories and still refusing to help.

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# Global warming on back burner

NICHOLAS SCHOON  
Environment Correspondent

The world's largest and wealthiest polluters have promised to reform - but not just yet. Two weeks of ministerial negotiations on tackling global warming ended in Geneva yesterday with applause and hopeful statements, but no concrete commitments on cutting the level of emissions.

The most painful decisions are scheduled for a meeting in Kyoto, Japan, 16 months away, when the developed nations have committed themselves to coming up with something definite. After Geneva, the world is not much wiser about what that something will be.

What is needed, if the current change in climate is to be slowed down in the next century, is drastic cuts in the emissions of carbon dioxide which come mainly from burning coal, oil and gas.

The alternative is to hope that the man-made rises in temperature and sea levels, and the shifts in rainfall and winds will be too slight to worry about. Coping with change in the future makes more sense than making sacrifices now, runs this argument from the Opec countries and the oil-and-coal-industry lobby groups.

Ever since climate change became the subject of serious diplomacy six years ago, it has been clear that the developed nations - who have produced most of the carbon dioxide to date - would have to lead the way. Only when the United States, the European Union and Japan demonstrated they were serious could the rising carbon giants like India and China be expected to follow suit.

That continued to be the line at this week's United Nations talks in Geneva on strengthening the global climate treaty signed at the Rio Earth Summit four years ago. The 150 nations attending agreed, in a ministerial declaration, that the rich countries would commit themselves to "legally-binding objectives for emission limitations and significant overall reductions within specified timeframes".

The statement raises many questions. How can an objective be legally binding? "We're not too excited about that, and we won't be putting it into our national legislation," said a member of the British delegation.

And what might constitute a significant cut within a reasonably effective timescale? Britain, which with Germany, is one of the strongest campaigners for action in the rich

world, has suggested 10 per cent cuts in emissions between 2000 and 2010.

But to the disappointment of the more progressive countries and environmental groups, the declaration proposed no percentage cuts and was vague on dates, suggesting 2005, 2010 and 2020.

"You just can't get the Americans to propose anything now because of their presidential election," said the UK delegate.

Even so, the progressives had worried that the US - the world's biggest single user of fossil fuels - would refuse to even consider binding itself to making cuts in the future. It was an American change of heart which allowed the declaration to be made, but instead of being fully accepted by the conference it was presented as a document of which delegates "took note" and was written into the official record.

Bill Hare, chief climate campaigner for the environmental group Greenpeace International, said: "We're disappointed at the lack of timetables and targets, but even so this declaration is a significant step forward."

The document was rejected, however, by the fossil-fuel exporting countries of Opec, Russia and by Australia.



Bitter tide: A girl and her brother collect water for washing in Kamrangirchar, in the suburbs of Dhaka, Bangladesh. The government has ordered relief supplies be airlifted in to the flooded northern and western regions, where 23 have died this year. Photograph: AFP

## Suffocating city discovers new bar is a real gas

TORONTO DAYS

It may look like Canada's version of Chicago - a sprawling, ethnically mixed metropolis with impressive skyscrapers on a sparkling lakefront - but whereas the Windy City vibrates, this place, well, languishes. Toronto is often described as a place that is rather dull.

"And then," proclaimed the kindly native who had ridden next to me on the train into town, "there is the Eaton Center. That is the highlight". He had said it all. He was speaking of a steel-and-glass ark on Yonge Street, the city's largest shopping mall. Malls always have a numbing effect on me and the Eaton is no exception.

So, when my body is moaning from too much celebration the night before, what is to be done to escape this feeling of suffocation? My mission of the day promises to provide the solution. I am going to a bar, also on Yonge Street, that can serve me what I need - not alcohol, not even a double-shot latte, but a cool blast of pure oxygen.

You may laugh (the jogger passing the door as I arrived caught my eye and smirked knowingly), but oxygen really is the main offering of the O:Spa Bar. And we are not talking just fresh air (Toronto can get smoggy in summer) but pure, or, to be accurate, 99.9 per cent pure, medical-grade oxygen.

This is the brain-child of two Toronto natives: Lisa Charron, an architectural designer and her television camerawoman friend, Shanika Hunter. Bravely, or brazenly, they are exploring another niche-market in flaky 20th-century consumption. If Starbucks can sweep the continent with its baroque coffee concoctions and Absolut Vodka can make conquests by scenting their liquor with lemon, what can't these two do with oxygen?

Their pitch sounds compelling. In a world that brims with toxins and pollutants, why not mitigate the damage to our body with an occasional dose of life-giving O? Athletes take oxygen before competing and so do rock stars, like Mick Jagger. Michael Jackson reportedly favours napping in his personal oxygen chamber. "When oxygen is deficient," says the bar's promotional leaflet, "unwanted organisms flourish and we wallow in our own waste products". Golly, I had better go in.

Within an environment that is half-saloon, with a sweeping bar of granite and elegant stools but no beer pumps (smoking is definitely forbidden), and half-clinic, Stan Getz soothes from the sound system and tropical fish distract in a giant tank. But what does one do exactly? How does oxygen come, by the pint, or the cup, or perhaps by mask? Actually, it comes via a clear plastic tube with two little prongs with holes that go up your nostrils. "Everyone has their own terminology," Lisa says helpfully. "You come to take a hit, a blast, or a dose, or there's 'up your nose with a rubber hose'."

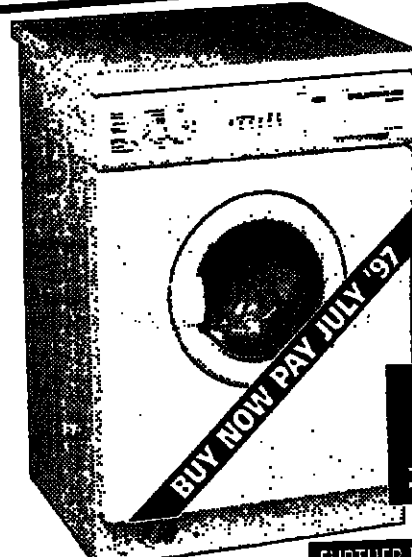
And up it goes. Rather than doing it sitting at the bar (not a good venue for romantic liaisons) I choose to partake in one of the three private rooms at the back. Lisa takes my pulse (frighteningly low) and my "blood oxygen saturation level" (also low) with a little thimble-like thing she slips on my finger. Then I choose whether to have my oxygen unadulterated, or bubbled through a jar of water and organic fruit to give it flavour. I am set up with organic pineapple and my 30-minute, Can \$22 (\$11) session begins.

Sssss. I breathe and I wait. I know what I am meant to feel, because Lisa has told me. Something about an expanding feeling in my chest and a sudden return of energy. This is not unpleasant. I am reminded of the temporary relief of a strong eucalyptus sweet when I have a cold. I do not feel my hangover magically washing away. When I'm done my heart is beating faster (it should not be) but the oxygen in my red blood cells has satisfyingly gone up.

At the bar, two young guys are hooking up. Ryan turns out to be an oxygen nerd. He has bottles at home and takes a dose every day. "I'm trying not to laugh," confesses Larry. "This is pleasant, but there isn't exactly lift-off yet!". Lisa is relentless in her enthusiasm: "This is the bar of the 21st century." She and Shanika have already had 70 requests from people around the world hoping to license their idea. But for now this is the only oxygen bar in the world and it is in just the right place: a city otherwise identified with suffocation.

David Osborne

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It is unclear if Remias knew the hiding place of "Oskar F" but he had a reputation in Bratislava as the ex-SIS agent's link to the outside world. This

## HOW PAY



**B**ulgarian police said they had arrested a former member of the national skiing team, two years after he used a lightning rod to climb through the roof of the National Art Gallery and stole five valuable paintings. The man, described as "strong-built with a good taste in art," rolled up the paintings and spirited them out of the building via a balcony. He then sold the paintings, which were not insured, to wealthy Bulgarians. *Reuters - Sofia*

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**D**emocratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi forged a one-day truce yesterday with the generals who rule Burma, laying a wreath at her father's tomb at state ceremonies to commemorate his assassination 49 years ago.

Speculation had been rife whether mounting tensions between Ms Suu Kyi and the government would prevent her publicly honouring General Aung San, Burma's independence hero, whose legacy both his daughter and the government claim. *AP - Rangoon*

**R**ussia's lower house of parliament expressed concern at an upsurge of violence in Chechnya and urged President Boris Yeltsin to halt the fighting and restart peace talks. "We call on you to stop all military actions, renew negotiations and expose [their contents] to the whole population of the Russian Federation," the State Duma said in a resolution. *Reuter - Moscow*

**S**ri Lanka Tamil rebels sank a navy gunboat with 40 servicemen aboard as army reinforcements battled to rescue a strategic base under heavy attack from the rebels. They claim to have killed 500 soldiers, military officials said. *Reuter - Colombo*

**T**he former "court poet" of the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu said he will start his own bid for presidential power this weekend with a rally in the Communist stronghold of Craiova. Adrian Paunescu staged pageants in the 1980s in praise of Ceausescu whom he called "the genius of the Carpathians." *Reuter - Bucharest*

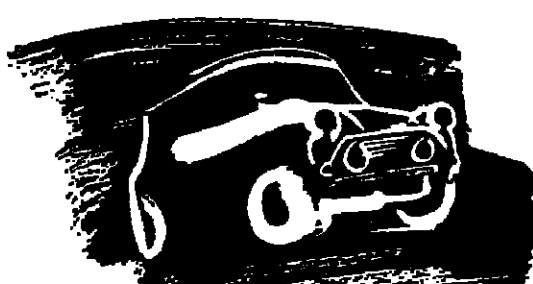
**T**hai tourism authorities have asked South Korea to warn its nationals not to visit Thailand eat bear parts which they consider a delicacy. The warning comes amid uproar sparked by the arrest of five South Korean tourists a week ago after police discovered 24 bear paws and bear entrails in their van during a traffic stop. *AP - Bangkok*

**P**olish divers exploring an 18th-century English wreck under the Baltic sea have found a legible book and other relics preserved by the vessel's cargo of tar. PAP news agency said the divers have penetrated the hull of the *General Cartleton* of Whitby, which sank in the mouth of the Piasnica river in 1785. Finds include the ship's bell, bearing the three-master's name, a whisky bottle, pistols, a sailor's uniform and a leather-bound manual on navigation which should prove readable. *Reuter - Warsaw*

**M**ichael Jackson said he wanted to buy a house in South Africa because he loved the country so much and would include the country in a world tour starting in September. *Reuter - Sun City*

**B**ulgarian police said they had arrested a former member of the national skiing team, two years after he used a lightning rod to climb through the roof of the National Art Gallery and stole five valuable paintings. The man, described as "strong-built with a good taste in art", rolled up the paintings and spirited them out of the building via a balcony. He then sold the paintings, which were not insured, to wealthy Bulgarians. *Reuter - Sofia*

**TEAR AWAY.**





# Paul Touvier

هكذا من الاجل



1550 من الـ 1500

Boon



# The Independent Weekend

## GOO!

Great days out for  
children: a new  
summer series

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## Don't believe what you read in the papers — it's pure science fiction

I used to be that newspapers told you about what had just happened. "Just" is a relative term, of course: in the 18th century, it could mean anything up to several months. "By God! Constantinople has fallen," exclaimed the coffee-house regular, unaware that the city had changed hands three times since. But technology has steadily diminished the gap until "just" can be a matter of hours, or even minutes. And from time to time it's possible to wonder whether we might have overshot in the headlong rush to immediacy. It certainly looked that way this week when the *Guardian* carried a front-page story about a BT research scientist who was claiming that a chip capable of recording an individual human memory and transferring it into another brain would be practicable within the next 30 years. In 2025, it seems, a grizzled Bob Hoskins will be

telling us that "It's good to dahload", encouraging young people to plug into a communication console and transmit their recent trip to the Glastonbury Festival for Grandma's edification. In a wonderfully comical accompanying photograph, Dr Chris Winter posed with the members of the Soul Catcher 2025 team, all garbed in blue clean-room suits.

The preposterous name tells you as much as you need to know about this project, but even without that clue, one's synapses only had to flash and spark for a few seconds to realise that the report was the purest science fiction, a breathlessly glib account of a non-event that wasn't even scheduled to take place for another 30 years (and, for many obvious reasons, never will). Dr Winter's claim was philosophically naïve as well as being practically far-fetched — an excursion into territory already

THOMAS SUTCLIFFE



artistically explored by Philip K Dick, William Gibson and, most recently, Dennis Potter.

Nor was it the only jaunt into science fantasy that you could find in the daily papers this week. Other newspapers gave space to a *New Scientist* report, which imagined what would happen to London if everyone left for the weekend

and didn't come back. Within five years, we were told, a fine lawn of turf and clover would have established itself on composted leaves; after 30 years hick woodland would spring up in open spaces; and after 200 years the large buildings would begin to collapse. Where Dr Winter's story had been an exercise in utopian science fiction, a vision of new possibilities, the ruined London piece was in the apocalyptic mode. It delivered much the same delicious, admonitory frisson as the final shot from *Planet of the Apes*, in which the time-travelling protagonists stare down from a scrubby bluff to see the Statue of Liberty protruding from the sand, and it bore roughly the same relation to the real world. (Newspapers have not yet conducted any exercises in extra-planetary Hchbity, the sort of science fiction in which Fetta strokes the lilac

pet of his high-spirited quorn, but it may be only a matter of time.)

One doesn't want to be too pious about these excursions into fiction. Newspapers have long been in the entertainment business, so it is hardly surprising that they would want to secure for themselves some of the intellectual liberties science fiction enjoys. Besides, it chimes with a peculiarly modern habit of mind — one forced on us by the acceleration in technological change that began with the Industrial Revolution. In a passage in his journals, Byron declares his conviction that in the future men will travel by air at unimaginable speeds, a poetic daydream that has its origins not in magic (as it would have done a century or two earlier) but in manufacture. These days, with kids in the Treasury daydreaming about the next millennium, the sort of imaginative

speculation that used to be the preserve of artists and writers has found a place at the heart of politics, so it is hardly surprising that newspapers have followed suit. The faster you travel, the more forward visibility you need. As a result, extrapolation — whether it's the terror-struck visions of a BSE-ravaged Britain, which some newspapers carried at the height of the panic, or a more responsible exercises, in social stargazing — has become a well-established journalistic tool.

But there are dangers in elevating the non-existent over dull reality. Science fiction is always a dangerous temptation for newspapers because an imagined future is so much more exciting than the intractable present, with its confusions and uncertainty. Besides, it may be that the best way of arriving at tomorrow safely is to properly understand what went wrong yesterday.

## What never turns you on

As 'Voyeurz' struts into town, Jasper Rees sneaks a look at just how unerotic the naked body on stage can be...

All London is in a lather of excitement over *Voyeurz*, the new "musical revue" that opens at the Whitehall Theatre on Monday. Why, even the Royal Court, that bastion of new writing, has brought forward the start-time of its own Monday-night premiere to allow dedicated critics to hotfoot it to the rival thespian — sorry, lesbian — attractions across town. For the new show, set in a Manhattan nightclub, is all about a young girl venturing into the uncharted caverns of her own sexuality, and it's stuffed to the gills with hot sapphic action. Apparently.

But the slaving anticipation probably has rather less to do with the show itself than the prospect of the reviews. It takes a huge leap of the imagination to picture any of the critics giving the thumbs-up to a show starring the members, if that's the word, of Fem 2 Fem, the notably talentless "lipstick lesbian" quartet.

You have to applaud producer and co-director Michael White's courage. He has spotted that lesbianism is chic, but may have miscalculated in his assumption that it's marketable. It was White who brought us *Oh, Calcutta!* all those years ago. In its wake, *The Driest Show in Town*, *Let My People Come* and *Carte Blanche* offered further lastings of naked flesh. So White and stage nudity used to enjoy an intimate relationship. But that was back in the 1970s, when a naked body on stage performed an entirely different, and entirely basic function. Nudity was unapologetically offered as a stimulant to the audience's groin.

But White and Co were so busy celebrating the new liberty, they didn't realise how singularly unerotic nudity in the theatre actually is. Even Clifford Williams, who directed *Oh, Calcutta!* in both London and Paris, admits as much. "A slow striptease in the right lighting might be erotic. But quickly throwing off your clothes isn't."

Williams is something of a pioneer in this department. In 1965 he cast a gaggle of strippers for the orgy in Schoenberg's opera *Moses und Aron* directed by Peter Hall at the Royal Opera House. To circumvent the censorious rules on nudity (eg nipples had to be covered if the actress moved, but could be exposed if she stood still), he had to ask the performers to shave off their pubic hair, seal off the offending area with elastoplast and stick on an artificial replacement. In 1968, directing *Dr Faustus* at Stratford, he had Helen of Troy walk diagonally downstage clad in nothing but gold paint.

Since the Lord Chamberlain hung up his wig, the great and good of the profession have dutifully flashed the relevant bits if called for: think of Peter Firth in *Equus*, Diana Rigg in *Achilles and Cleopatra*, Ian McKellen in *Coriolanus*. But the stage has never been able, or scarcely even tried, to use nudity the way the screen has. "I'm not sure that you can actually achieve any kind of sexual response in the theatre," says David Storey, whose recently revived play *The Changing Room* was a positive festival of male genitalia. "In the cinema, there is a precondition: you're perceiving through a keyhole, which is the lens of the camera. A camera is an objective instrument but it's highly subjective in what it shows. The subjectivity there is controlled in a way that you can't in the theatre."

Context is all. *Life Class*, another play of Storey's from the early 1970s, calls for an actress



Comic? Certainly. Marketable? Maybe. Sexy? No way: 'Carte Blanche' (top), 'Oh, Calcutta!', 'Voyeurz', 'Equus' (above, from left) Gavin West, AP, Stuart Morris, John Haynes

to play a nude model. And, just like a life class, the theatre contrives to drain the naked form of all sexuality. This may explain why actresses have no quarrel with playing women who pose for painters. Stanley Spencer's two wives, played by Anna Chancellor and Deborah Findlay, sit in Pam Gems's *Stanley* (currently at the National). Flora Crewe has her portrait painted in Tom Stoppard's *Indian Ink* — a scene the author may have found it easier to write for Felicity Kendal when it was intended merely for radio broadcast. But if theatre cannot replicate the screen's inti-

macy with (mostly female) nakedness, it can achieve an array of more interesting effects. In the theatre, nudity actually means something. When Simon Russell Beale undressed in *Edward II*, the character was humiliated by nakedness, then anally assassinated. In *Killer Joe*, the thriller play by Tracy Letts about trailer-trash murder, Killer Joe Cooper orders Dottie to undress as a way of establishing a charismatic power over her. When Joe and Shelia later stroll about stitchless from the waist down, it announces their shocking withdrawal from the moral order.

In the majority of instances nudity equals bath-time — most famously in *Mousetrap* — and a kind of cleansing for the character. In *Pygmalion*, Frances Barber's Eliza leapt into the tub to wash away the flower girl. At the end of Ayckbourn's *Way Upstream*, the surviving couple throw themselves naked into the water to celebrate their liberation from the boat's tyrannical captain.

And then there was *Dead Furry*, Terry Johnson's play about comedy and marital breakdown, which skilfully aligned the audience's embarrassment with that of the characters. Richard the

gynaecologist is persuaded by his wife, who's desperate to conceive, to undress as part of a course in sexual therapy. The audience communally cringes as she makes to touch the offending organ, but the doorbell spurs our collective blushes. One night at the Hampstead Theatre, David Haig, who played Richard, went sick and Johnson, a sometime actor, had to take the role himself, which might make him think twice next time he writes the words "He removes his underpants". He deployed the script as a figleaf.

In the West End transfer and tour, Kevin McNally played the role 400 times. "It always feels really bizarre at first," he says, "but it's amazing how quickly you can get used to it. *Dead Furry* was a lot easier because the character I was playing was more embarrassed about having his clothes off than I was. Towards the end I would think, this is just a ludicrous thing to be doing — I'm a 40-year-old man with three children and every day I'm going to a public place and waggling my willy about. It doesn't seem to me to be a very sensible way of making a living." McNally is something of a serial trouser-dropper, and recalls taking issue with actresses who claimed that most stage nudity exploited women.

If there ever was an imbalance, these days it has been redressed. From *The Changing Room* to *Burning Blue*, the theatre offers sundry helpings of meat and two veg. Frances Barber, who has twice been totally or partly naked on-stage, claims that "actresses are asked to do it more often. But they're kicking up a fuss about it, and saying 'I'm not going to do it unless he does'. Most of us felt that it simply wasn't fair."

But however much that unfairness has been eradicated within the profession, there's still no accounting for (mostly male) critical reaction. When Barber, who had to put up with "My Bare Lady" headlines after *Pygmalion*, played Lady Macbeth at the Royal Exchange, she pulled down her dress to illustrate the line "Unsex me here". "It was the reverse of titillation. But one of the critics in Manchester told the audience where to sit to get an eyeful. We did sell all those seats, so I used to cheat everybody and pretend I was going to do it on that side and then whisk around and do it on the other side of the auditorium."

The frankest nude happening took place earlier this month at the Royal Court. *Body Talk* collected interviews with members of the public and the cast into a discussion of the male body, in which the bathing actors were nude for the duration of the work. There were 20 minutes on fore-skins alone. "It wasn't nudity as in 'I have to be nude in this scene'," says Stephen Daldry, who directed it. "It was nudity as in 'this is my body, this is what I hate and this is what I like about it; this is my emotional reality because of this body'. So it was far more exposing than normal nudity."

So exposing, in fact, that Daldry decreed nudity for all during rehearsal. "I always felt that if you're asking actors to take their clothes off, everybody in the rehearsal room should take their clothes off. Me, the stage management team, anybody that came in. At one point we were going to ask the audience to take their clothes off as well. It would have been fascinating to see who would come. If you'd like to come and see this show, do. But you have to take your clothes. Would you have come?" Well, would you?

*Voyeurz* opens Monday (0171-369 1735)

### ...while Andrew Dickson meets two actresses who stripped for art

Jenny Runacre made her debut in *Oh, Calcutta!* in 1971. Looking back on it now, she says that she enjoyed the experience and thought "stage nudity was relevant to the time". But she worries about what has come after, which she now sees as a commercial exploitation of sex.

"I don't think we, the cast, were being exploited — we were very well paid and did it by choice. But it was an exploitative image of women." "Men too," interjects her teenage daughter, Mariel. She's right, in so far as male actors also disrobed (one being Tony Blair's father-in-law, Anthony Booth). Runacre concedes that it is not just young actresses who are pressured into taking their clothes off in public. "I've known guys who were so desperate for work that, if they were told to hang their dicks out on stage, they'd do it."

That said, adds Runacre, the sketches in *Oh, Calcutta!* were all "male fantasies", while *Voyeurz*, too, for all its focus on lesbian sexuality, is, she points out, written by a man. Yet more sleazy male imaginings about female sex, she suspects, rather than the real, liberated thing. "A show about lesbians should be written by

women. I'm not saying that *Oh, Calcutta!* should have had all women writers, but at least there should have been one or two."

As it was, the one female contributor, Edna O'Brien, had her sketch dropped from the English run of the show. Linda Marlowe is also an *Oh, Calcutta!* veteran. By contrast with Runacre, she believes that its effect was liberating rather than degrading. "It was a show about sex and it showed nudity, which had never been seen before on the English stage. It seems rather tame now and there haven't been incessant nude sex shows on the serious stage since, have there?"

In fact, Marlowe worries more about violence in the movies than the frank depiction of sex on stage or screen. "Rather a thousand *Oh, Calcutta!*s than violence. When the Dowager Lady Birdwood complained about *Oh, Calcutta!* the police came for a week, took notes and decided not to prosecute. So they must have thought it was harmless." She also thinks that Ken Tynan, who devised the show, genuinely believed that it was important to break the taboos. "I don't think he was doing it for

sensationalism. That it made a lot of money for some people is another matter."

As with Jenny Runacre, who went on to have a distinguished acting career in films by such art-house masters as Pasolini, Antonioni and Derek Jarman, *Oh, Calcutta!* did Linda Marlowe's career no harm. Soon afterwards, she took the lead in a shocking, powerful fringe play, *Dynamo*, which later became an "underground" film. This in turn brought her to the attention of Steven Berkoff, who cast her in his own versions of *The Trial*, *Metamorphosis*, *Greek and Decadence*. Lately, she has taken to directing herself, most recently at the Leicester Haymarket theatre.

But it was *Dynamo* that Marlowe counts as being her real breakthrough to serious acting — and in that she was also required to appear naked. "Jenny Runacre, incidentally, played a stripper in the same show." "I have been asked by a producer to revive *Dynamo* and direct it myself," says Marlowe. "But I won't. It was, like *Oh, Calcutta!*, very much of its time, a very Seventies play. To revive it now might be for the wrong reasons."

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## OPERA

Handel's *Xerxes*, Steiner Theatre  
Antony Peattie applauds the London  
debut of the Early Opera Company

The minuscule theatre at the Rudolf Steiner Centre proved, perhaps unexpectedly, a good setting for Handel opera: the authentic instrument orchestra of nine, spiritedly directed from the harpsichord by Christian Cumyn, shared the small stage with a steep ramp and the singers. The setting (designed by Ffion Costain) encouraged cast and players to interact – the continuo, complete with theorbo, was particularly lively. It made the most of thin resources and left no room for anyone to hide. The violins occasionally sounded scrawny but, after some initial nervousness, all the musicians played with spirit and considerable stylishness.

Handel wrote *Sense* (*Xerxes*) for some of the greatest singers in the world, for a theatre with spectacular scenic resources. The new Early Opera Company fielded a cast with no weak links, demonstrating what a wealth of talent exists among the junior ranks of British singers. Louise Mori excelled in the title role, wielding a beautiful, soft-grained mezzo voice with style and passion. Joanne Edworthy made the most of Arsameses and Jane Stevenson was a memorable Amastre. Technically, these are a king, his brother and a princess convincingly disguised as a male warrior. Perhaps wisely, Sarah Alexander's production made no attempt to fool us. *Xerxes* and his brother cross-dressed in suits and ties, while the sultry Arsameses wore warrior-red lipstick, a cascade of fair hair, black boots and a leather overcoat over a trumpy frock. The three women's interminable interaction may have suggested a pilot episode for *Lestians Behaving Badly*, but nothing to frighten the horses there; it made perfect dramatic sense, thanks to the singers' wholehearted acting, so long as you ignored the masculine endings to the Italian nouns and adjectives.

Alexander Marengo takes the same small liberty, incidentally, in *My Night with Handel*, a Channel 4 film (to be shown on 3 August) featuring some great Handelian singing, fetching views of London and a loose (but, ah, television) narrative line that occasionally trivialises the music.

There was nothing trivial about this *Xerxes*, though. As the focus of romantic interest, Romilda was sung with great charm and a real sense of character by Amanda Boyd, who never allowed her sister and rival, Atalanta (the excellent Jeni Bern), to steal the show. Their scene in pyjamas was particularly well conceived. The Early Opera Company has got off to a promising start with this, its London debut. At its basis was some seriously good coaching, even if, as an awesome, shaven-headed man in leather remarked wistfully in the interval, "You just don't hear a good trill nowadays."

## THEATRE Northanger Abbey, Greenwich Theatre, London

Cloaked villains and masked intriguers point up the funny side to Matthew Francis's adaptation of Jane Austen's Gothic satire. By David Benedict



Hearts dilating with pleasure: Celia Bannerman as Mrs Allen and the wonderfully wide-eyed Sarah-Jane Holm as Catherine

Stuart Morris

Poor Jane Austen. She should have died hereafter. That way she could have lived to collaborate with Andrew Lloyd Webber and really cleaned up. Not so fanciful a notion as you might imagine. Long before Alison Steadman hooted her way through the BBC *Pride and Prejudice*, Hermione Gingold was, by all accounts, a redoubtable Mrs Bennet in the 1959 Broadway musical *First Impressions*. The show was originally entitled *A Perfect Evening*, and having heard the score, I can attest to the wisdom of the name change.

Only someone lately returned from a year spent trekking in the Himalayas could fail to have noticed that Jane Austen is box-office dynamite. Finding *Northanger Abbey* on stage, therefore, is not exactly cause for smelling salts. The surprise is how well it works. Certain recent adaptations have succeeded in little but reminding audiences that a cramped theatre seat is not the most comfortable way to discover a novel. Director and adapter Matthew Francis repeats his winning formula by remaining faithful to the spirit rather than the letter of the original, replacing the private contemplation of narrative with something more public and dramatic.

As the hero, Henry Tilney, remarks: "The person who has not the pleasure in a good novel must be intolerably stupid." When the wonderfully wide-eyed and artless Sarah-Jane Holm as innocent Catherine forsakes her Wiltshire village for the pleasures and perils of Bath, she cannot leave behind the Gothic Romances

which people her fevered imagination. Consequently, looming branches and a huge black veil dominate Lez Brotherston's spare and evocative set, and in addition to fleshing out the characters, members of the cast also lurk wittily about the stage playing the cloaked villains and masked intriguers of our heroine's dreams. This simple device not only dramatises Austen's comic satire of the Gothic novel, but is also a deft theatrical answer to the basic problem of authorial tone which bedevils any adaptation.

Francis also uses Catherine to narrate, giving further room for comedy by retaining Austen's ironic detachment from her heroine's pleasures and plight. These difficulties overcome, he neatly compresses the action and spins the scenes along in agreeable fashion, aided and abetted by a cast who are clearly, as it were, having a ball. Rebecca Saire is all vanity and dissembling eyes as fashionable, faithless Isabella, while Karen Lewis brings a simple intensity to lonely Eleanor. James Wallace is fine and understating as Henry, exuding confidence and gravitas as not only a man of principle, but someone who knows suspiciously more than is strictly necessary about the cost and care of a muslin gown and worships the memory of his mother.

At one point, Catherine's heart is said to dilate with pleasure. By the end of this infectiously enjoyable evening, you'd have to be pretty stout-hearted not to admit to a similar expression of delight.

To 17 Aug. Booking 0181-858 7755

## FOLK

Martin Hayes, Olympia, Dublin

The soft-spoken fiddler from Clare takes  
Colin Harper to new heights of emotion

There's a sense, among Irish musicians, that Martin Hayes has come out of nowhere to stay out on his own; there's also a sense, among the people who write about Irish music, that there are no more adjectives, epithets or cross-generic comparisons left to be used about him. Comparisons in print to the likes of Miles Davis and Jimi Hendrix cause Hayes to step back in quite genuine humility and usually to mumble some self-deprecating witticism in an unmistakably soft-spoken East Clare accent. If he is indeed on that level of genius, he'll be the first in history to combine it with being an ordinary bloke.

Bearing more outward resemblance to Noel Redding than to Jimi Hendrix – mad haircut and scholarly spectacles – Hayes was born into a Clare family with deep traditional music roots. Moving to Chicago in the 1980s with a series of business ideas that didn't work, Hayes found himself playing music for a living, going through a Celtic rock and jazz-fusion phase before realising that, no, just like the business ideas, the public didn't want this either. In 1993, exhausted, he made a low-key album of reflective traditional tunes. The public responded. A second one, *Under the Moon*, released last year, kick-started a critical acclaim/cult following bandwagon that continues apace.

The albums, however, show only a glimpse of Hayes's performance magic. The on-stage chemistry between the fiddler and his accompanist, Denis Cahill (not on the records), is truly exceptional. Cahill, from Chicago, is a journeyman guitarist, totally new to Irish music and unencumbered by notions of "how it's done". The names of the tunes are almost irrelevant, for between them they have utterly deconstructed the material to create a vast, spacious soundscape aching with the sores and celebrations of centuries, soaring with the slow-burning dynamics of modern classicists like Pärt and Gorecki. Seemingly every arts writer and musician in town was there – the entirety of Altan, kings of the trad castle included – sitting in pin-drop silence at the feet of the master. The creaking of his chair could be heard at the back of the 1,200-seat auditorium.

There's a notion that JS Bach was a conduit for the music of God – stirring the soul, rewriting the rules, taking the listener by way of austerity and solemnity to previously unreachable heights. What occurs when Martin Hayes and Denis Cahill lock in together on a stage is, for me at least, on that same transcendental level – way beyond the traditional vehicle and onto a different plane of experience. It would seem that the master of silence has found a business idea that works.

## TELEVISION

Chicago Hope (BBC 1) Scripted by a team with a fevered imagination, it just needs live-audience laughter to convince Jasper Rees that this is a comedy

In the surgical unit of Chicago Hope they take the word theatre a little too literally. Last week the brother of a man denied a heart transplant took a doctor hostage at gunpoint. He stole the gun from the colleague of a policeman riddled with perilously unexploded bullets. Next week the team will operate on a man with a steel rod sticking painfully through his head, while another patient, refusing consent for surgery, will become convinced that Dr Shutt is the reincarnation of Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. She has to dress up and sing "Some-

where Over the Rainbow" to win his confidence. I am not making this up. But someone is.

This week brought a comparatively restful week in the fevered imagination of the script team. A boy is wheeled in white with hypothermia after a skating accident. A man with AIDS is injected with malaria. Dr Infante, the ball-breaker with the crash-helmet hairdo, makes a pass at Dr Geiger, who is performing an autopsy at the time ("You need to get out more," she says. "You're playing with corpses. Male corpses").

And the show made a guest appearance in *Cybill*.

If the social strata of American television were less rigidly observed, it would be just as appropriate for Cybill Shepherd to make a guest appearance in *Chicago Hope*.

You keep on waiting for the laughter of a live audience to confirm your suspicion that this is actually a comedy, and Cybill would surely do the trick. But the sheer narrative velocity keeps it from slipping over into permanent levity. When two doctors are bantering in a

corridor for more than five seconds, you just know an orderly is going to bulldoze straight through them to race to some preposterously afflicted patient just coming through the door. And so the show oscillates: scripted by schizophrenics, and choreographed like a ballet to leave not the merest hint of empty time.

One tweak of the knob and it would all mutate into parody. But that would involve ditching all the meaningful plotlines about faint hearts. Dodgy ticker of the week belonged to Dr Geiger. Like

the boy with hypothermia, his is in deep freeze. When Dr Infante makes her proposition, he needs time to thaw, and maybe a little more allegorical coaxing. Fortunately, the boy's ear has fallen off, and when Dr Infante gets to sew it back on, Dr Geiger watches the op and can suddenly hear where she's coming from. In the ensuing clinch scene, he swallows her diamond earring. She immediately proposes an endoscopy, though script-wise it's perhaps a little early for her to be shafting him. The human body is such a useful storytelling tool.

Meanwhile, over in *Cybill*, the star is in a hospital bed, playing *Chicago Hope*'s vegetable *du jour*, who's in a coma after being hit by a recycling truck. This week Cybill learnt of the wedding between her closest professional rival and her best friend Maryann's ex-husband. They attend the nuptials bent on causing mayhem, but achieve only the mildest comic effects with food fights, stink bombs and water dunking. It was one of those scripts where you felt the whole show has been hit by a recycling truck.

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THE OPERA  
**LULU**

## overview

Elvis Costello, the man who made specs sexy, celebrates nearly 20 years at the top of the singer-songwriting tree touring with the Attractions (no support), playing two and a quarter hours of greatest hits.

A *Cyrano de Bergerac*-style romantic comedy, revolving around Janeane Garofalo as a pet therapist on an LA talk show, with Uma Thurman and new Brit-boy Ben Chaplin, by Michael Heathers Lehmann.

Christine Shafer plays the title role with Kathryn Harries and Norman Bailey in Glyndebourne's first production of Berg's opera. Andrew Davis conducts, Graham Vick produces and Paul Brown designs.

## critical view

Even Andrew Mueller was impressed. "A great talent... a pretty good night out." "A slice of history and a mature artist who can do what he pleases," announced NME. "What Costello has lost in spleen he has made up for in interpretive skill," enthused the *Guardian*. "This absorbing, sometimes compelling show," clapped the *Telegraph*. "Flashy keyboard workouts of Stevie Nicks and the rock-solid rhythm section of Pete and Bruce Thomas provided the backbone to a performance that was duly satisfying," smiled the *Times*.

Adam Mars-Jones was amused. "A much more likeable piece of product than *While You Were Sleeping*." "Deserves a warm reception for its agreeable performers and genial tone," reckoned the *Times*. "Not quite in the class of Heathers but better than anything he has accomplished since," said the *Guardian*. "A relief to come across a Hollywood comedy which doesn't talk down to its audience," cheered *Time Out*. "In an ideal world, both gals would recognise Brian as a ghastly poseur and embark on a lesbian affair instead," scoffed the *Spectator*.

Edward Seckerson was certain. "There's an Ortonesque anarchy about Vick's production... it sounds marvelous... heart-breaking." "A superbly realised and revelatory evening," agreed the *Guardian*. "Schafer could not be bettered," announced the *Standard*. "A triumph... This may be a cool *Lulu*, but it is an impressively accomplished one," explained the *Telegraph*. "The unthinkable has happened. *Lulu* has been rendered harmless and sedate," wailed the *Spectator*. "Apart from Davis, this is a profoundly dispiriting evening," moaned the *Times*.

## on view

Royal Court, Liverpool, tonight; Glasgow Barrowland, tomorrow; Shepherd's Bush Empire, London W12, Fri; The Roundhouse, London NW1, Sat (27).

94 minutes, Cert 15. On general release.

In repertoire at Glyndebourne (01273 813813) until 19 Aug. It will be relayed live, Channel 4 on 27 July and presented semi-staged at the Proms on 23 Aug.

## our view

Proves that nostalgia is what it used to be.

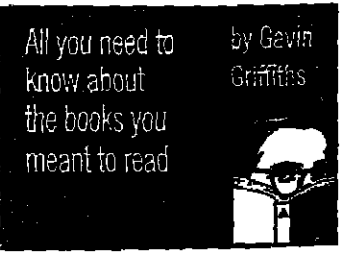
Light and slight but you could do a lot worse, and Uma Thurman redeems herself for her ghastly performance in *A Month by the Lake*.

Intricate, volatile, surpassingly passionate. Beg for returns.









**MOLL FLANDERS**  
by Daniel Defoe (1722)

**Plot:** Moll reflects on her outlandish life with brutal commonsense. Her mother was a Newgate prisoner, subsequently transported to Virginia. Brought up by the mayor of Colchester, Moll is passed on to another "lady". Marriage and childbearing become a means for social advancement. Moll takes a succession of husbands, one of whom removes her to his estates in Virginia. Here she meets her mother-in-law who turns out, by a stroke of fate, to be her mother. Refusing to remain in an incestuous marriage, she returns to London where she embarks on a series of bigamous relationships. One of these is with Jemmy, a highwayman. Finally she hitches herself to a banker who loses his dosh and reduces Moll to penury. Her luck runs out and she finds herself back in Newgate prison. Here she meets Jemmy and has a twitch of compassion. He intercedes for her and they are both sent to Virginia. Moll is re-united with her brother (and husband), her son and her mother's estates. The brother dies and Moll is free to marry Jemmy, claim her fortune and live happily ever after – repentant and rich.

**Theme:** Moll sins and excuses herself, wallowing in her own complacency but having no truck with self-pity. Human nature cannot progress until it learns to sympathise.

**Style:** The prose is bald and idiomatic with a careless disregard for felicities of phrasing.

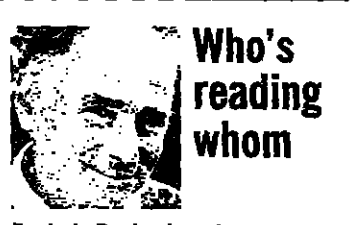
**Chief strengths:** Defoe explores the gap between lofty human aspiration and base spiritual achievement.

**Chief weaknesses:** The restless spontaneity sometimes becomes too much of a good thing.

**What they thought of it then:** Swift, Pope and the coffee-drinking crowd undervalued Defoe, finding him common but *Moll Flanders* gained intellectual respectability with Hazlitt and Lamb who applauded the book's anarchic tone.

**What we think of it now:** Critical debate is obsessed with Defoe's status as a conscious artist: he is either a master ironist manipulating his material with panache or a moral buffoon.

**Responsible for:** The English novel, or nothing at all, depending on your view.



**Frederic Raphael ponders**  
English society and Greek myths from rural France

**Who's reading whom**  
I've been sent the proofs of a new edition of Jane Austen's last gasp, *Sanditon*, written in the last months before her death and "finished by another lady". There isn't an introduction included, so I'm not sure how many chapters I have before Miss Austen leaves me. Meanwhile I've just finished Nicole Loraux's *Né de la Terre*, an examination of Greek myths of creation which favoured the superiority of the male. Whether the Greeks did or did not believe this is neither here nor there: her point is that by denying or asserting issues of sex and race no real light is shed on them.

# White wine in a thin green glass

30 years after her best-selling novel 'Poor Cow' was published, Nell Dunn has written the sequel. Louise Doughty reports

*My Silver Shoes* by Nell Dunn, Bloomsbury, £14.99

Authors who concern themselves with those at the bottom of the heap rarely achieve the kind of recognition accorded those who write about more genteel folk (unless they happen to be Scottish or Irish, and preferably brutal, drunken and/or drug-addicted – in which case it is okay to be poor). In a literary culture which rewards flashy prose, reading the work of Nell Dunn is like taking a long cool drink of water after a night of cocktails full of plastic monkeys and paper parasols. Her style is simple, her characters engaging. Her plots appear to meander while leading you to the relentless conclusion that for most people life is terribly hard and unfair although courage and optimism can make it worthwhile.

*My Silver Shoes* is the follow-up to one of Dunn's best known works, *Poor Cow*, published in 1967. Ken Loach turned it into his first feature film, a *vérité* classic with all the power of *Cathy Come Home*. Carol White starred as Joy – young, blonde, naïve – who at the beginning of both book and film has produced her first and only child, the much-loved Jonny, by the brutal Big Tom. Her life brightens when Tom is put inside for burglary only to go horribly awry when he gets out and they try to rebuild their marriage in Catford. (As someone who used to live in Catford, I can testify to what an uphill struggle that would be.) The novel ends inconclusively, on a note of resolution from Joy which is undercut by the considerable difficulties we know she will continue to face. It was a book crying out for a sequel.

Nearly 30 years later, *My Silver Shoes* finds Joy divorced but cohabiting with a dry-cleaning delivery man called Jeff. Her mother Gladys is ensconced in the flat next door and has a habit of letting herself into Joy's place just when she and Jeff are playing with the sex toys they bought in Amsterdam. Jonny is grown-up and stationed with the British Army in Northern Ireland but will soon re-appear as a deserter, hiding in the sitting room and playing the radio at full volume. If he doesn't smoke Joy's



Nell Dunn: "one of our most incisive observers of the human condition"

last fag, then Gladys will. The two of them are driving her round the twist. At first, Joy seems in as much of a pickle as she was in the earlier book, but we gradually realise that she has got herself together, even though she is forced to give up her much-loved work

at the job centre to care for the increasingly irascible Gladys. Throughout the novel, there is a great deal at stake. Joy is persistently good-humoured and optimistic but there is always the danger that circumstances will overwhelm her. It is a measure of Dunn's skill that she

portrays the bleakness of life on a South London housing estate without ever being mawkish or sentimental: nor do you ever feel that she has a political axe to grind. She simply presents Joy's life and lets readers draw their own conclusions.

The apparent realism and simplicity of this book hide the fact that it is extremely artful. "No tricks!" Raymond Carver was fond of declaring, seemingly unaware that the American brand of Dirty Realism was one of the most highly stylised prose forms going. British realism has always been more subtle but, in its own way, just as wrought and *My Silver Shoes* is an excellent example. The narrative form is mostly third person but occasionally drops casually into first, as it did in *Poor Cow*, with the addition of interpolations from the point of view of Gladys or Jonny.

From a more self-conscious writer this would be irritating but we are so in love with Dunn's characters that she gets away with it. Gladys is in her eighties but still has a lover of her own, the silent Toddy. "He's got no conversation," she complains, "he's just a shape in the other chair." She goes to a Day Centre but complains that everybody there is "old-fashioned." She is both individual and archetypal, the elderly relative we all adore but want to strangle.

But it is Joy herself who is at the heart of this almost heart-breaking book. Her life is a series of precious snatched moments alone. One evening, she sneaks into her own flat so that Gladys won't realise she's at home, and hangs some new curtains she has sewn herself at a friend's house. Then she makes herself a prawn cocktail and pours a glass of white wine in a thin green glass, gazing with pleasure at the curtains. Her few minutes of peace are shattered when Jeff calls on his mobile because his van has broken down at the end of the road and he's freezing cold and wants a Marmite sandwich.

It is at times like this that the novel could become crude, but when Joy and Jeff are sitting in the back of his van and she complains that her ears are cold he cups his hands over them and blows hot air to warm them up. Such tender moments punctuate the book – and it is this warmth and gentleness which make Dunn one of our most incisive observers of the human condition.

## Porridge and confidences

Marianne Brace labours over a rebirthing saga

**Coupling**  
by Wendy Perriam  
Flamingo, £15.99

Thirty-year old Beattie Bancroft has low self-esteem. She lives in a squalid bedsit, does dead-end jobs and sleeps with Max, a married newspaper editor with a "bulging stomach and plump and hairy breasts". Some people will do anything for a byline. *Coupling*, Wendy Perriam's twelfth novel, has her usual hallmarks of sex, religion and men who say things like "God, you were amazing," or wander around in black silky kimonos wielding a baby's bottle.

Within pages of this novel's opening, Beattie is frothing beneath the acrobatic hands of a male masseur. "She willed him never to stop, to inch his sensuous fingers higher and higher up her thigh..." She is at a health farm – a treat paid for by her lover. The massage over, and feeling intensely embarrassed, Beattie spends the rest of the weekend cringing around corners. And this leads her to meet the love of her life, who happens to be a woman.

On a midnight trek to the kitchen she comes across Elizabeth modelling clay in the art room. They share porridge and confidences. Elizabeth is everything Beattie is not. Fifty years old, this chain-smoking divorcee with her girlish figure and pony-

tail works as a psychotherapist and has four grown-up daughters. She also owns a large house in Kent brimming with Persian carpets, antiques and gold-framed paintings. She potters around in jeans and never wears make-up. Beattie becomes romantically fixated. When she gets a kidney infection, she soon convinces herself – and Elizabeth – that she might be dying of AIDS. The saintly Elizabeth takes Beattie home to nurse her. Beattie concentrates on proving that she's worthy of her love.

First she types up Elizabeth's psychotherapy manuscript. Then she introduces her to horses, betting and Gold Cup Days. Beattie feels sure that if she could only get into print she will win Elizabeth's respect. That means indulging Max, who insists on a lot of romping about in black suspenders.

Beattie finds herself perplexed at her sexual fantasies about Elizabeth. She buys her naff presents and insists they adopt the names George and Sophie. It's all female

bonding in winceyette nighties until Beattie discovers Elizabeth has fallen in love with Hugo, an art-dealer from her past.

Max, meanwhile, sends Beattie on an assignment for the woman's page. She sets off to a rebirthing course where amidst much hugging, crying and orgasmic shrieking people can "give birth to the person (they) were truly meant to be." Preparing to write something satirical, Beattie herself has a meaningful experience reliving the trauma of her own birth in which her male twin died.

*Coupling* is 437 pages long. The story could have been told in half the length and twice as sharply, but it reaches a comic peak with the rebirthing therapy. The flock of born-again happy folk are aiming for physical immortality, blithely ignoring the fact that their guru has been rushed to hospital with a heart attack.

A lot of labour has gone into rebirthing Beattie. Perriam wants us to take her seriously. She asks us to believe the impossible: a manipulative, selfish heroine who virtually overnight sheds her obsessive desire to possess Elizabeth and become instead a solid, dependable friend. It's hard to swallow. Unlike Beattie, we weren't reborn yesterday.

## Reading the bumps

Christopher Hirst is charmed by a Victorian comic pastiche

**Somewhat in the manner of**  
Tom Stoppard's *Travesties*, this lyrical comedy by Lynne Truss is based on her discovery – or invention, it scarcely matters – of a chance confluence of celebrities. But, compared to Stoppard's convergence of global figures such as Lenin and James Joyce at the international crossroads of Zurich, *Tennyson's Gift* is a far more insular work. This is literally so, since the setting is the Isle of Wight at the zenith of Victoria's reign.

Aside from the great poet, ensconced in grubby splendour ("surely the dirtiest laureate that ever lived") on his island retreat, the cast includes the prissy and distinctly creepy Rev Dodgson (about to publish his first *Alice* book), the scrounging, otherworldly painter G.F. Watts and his unlikely 16-year-old actress-wife Ellen Terry, and, finally, the wonderfully odd photographer Julia Margaret Cameron.

Not that this gallimaufry are entirely pleased to find themselves in proximity during the broiling July of 1864. Dodgson, an incorrigible lioniser, is set on befriending the poet. Cameron, while suspicious of having a photographic rival on her patch, is determined to capture an image of the hard in suitably heroic

**Tennyson's Gift**  
by Lynne Truss  
Hamish Hamilton, £16

pose. But Tennyson is equally resolved to remain in grumpy solitude, protected by his redoubtable wife Emily.

Into the midst of this famous stew plunges the American father-and-daughter team of phrenologists, Lorenzo and eight-year-old Jessie Fowler. Very much against his will, the author of *Alice in Wonderland* is lured on stage to have his bumps read by the distressingly precocious girl. Following her announcement to an entranced audience that the "Organ of Philoprogenitiveness [love of children] is considerably enlarged", the mathematician reacts alarmingly. Dodgson "reeled and writhed" before "some might say inevitably, he fainted in coils".

Truss scarcely puts a foot wrong for most of this wonderfully inventive *jeu d'esprit* – though Jessie's reference to her father's "Organ of Firmness" is a touch knowing, but very funny nonetheless. The slightly dreamy dialogue appears to owe a little to that master of the arch aside,

Ronald Firbank. Much of the book's humour is based on the contradiction between the starchy high-mindedness of Victorian art and its only-too-fallible practitioners. The sponging Watts devotes himself to morally uplifting work, with sombre, cryptic titles like "Fortitude overcome by Grace in the Absence of Hope". The domineering Cameron bullies fishermen into posing as King Caractacus by donning coal scuttles as helmets.

While hinting at deep and dangerous waters, the egregiously suspect figure of Dodgson is exploited for his comic ambiguity. As might be expected, surreal elements from the *Alice* books – from the painting of roses to the lobster quadrille – are recurring features.

Though the pace of the book turns a touch frenetic in the final stretch and its sunny mood darkens somewhat, the great Lynne has produced a comic concoction of considerable charm. She even provides a happy ending when the curmudgeonly poet at last consents to present "his amazing, famous, enormous head" before Cameron's lens. This epic of the Isle of Wight's literary apogee is virtually the perfect summer book. No deck-chair will be complete without it.



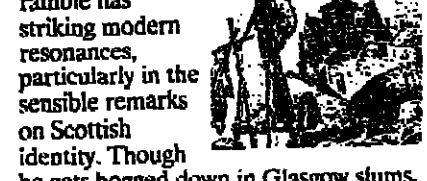
## Paperbacks

Reviewed by  
Emma Hagestadt  
and  
Christopher Hirst

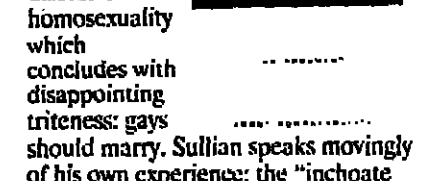
**Jack Kerouac: Selected Letters 1940-1956** ed Ann Charters (Penguin, £12.50)

Americans take the idea of being a writer so seriously. This book, acclaimed in the US, mainly consists of intense, maudering self-analysis. But there's no denying Kerouac's energy – an autobiographical epistle to Neal Cassidy running to 17 pages is not untypical. The writer's chameleon character changes according to the addressee: mystical to Ginsberg, macabre and viperish to Burroughs. This anthology stands up as a work of literature in its own right – and with the benefit of concision – but really for fans only.

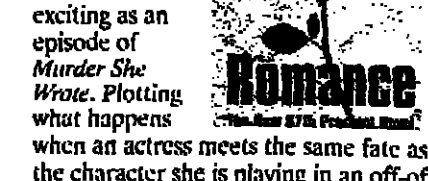
**Scottish Journey** by Edwin Muir (Mainstream, £6.99) Keen-eyed and thoughtful, the poet's 1935 rambles has striking modern resonances, particularly in the sensible remarks on Scottish identity. Though he gets bogged down in Glasgow slums, his account is highly readable. There are flashes of humour (a Serbian asks if a fight between prostitutes is a "national custom") and, occasionally, a real surprise. One statement would work wonders for the Scottish National Tourist Board: "Nowhere I have seen so bathed and steeped and rolled about in floating sexual desire as certain streets of Glasgow and Edinburgh."



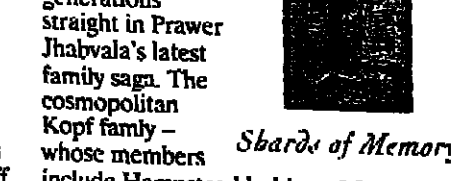
**Virtually Normal** by Andrew Sullivan (Picador, £6.99) An elegant discussion of homosexuality which concludes with disappointing triteness: gays should marry. Sullivan speaks movingly of his own experience: the "inchoate ache" he felt in childhood; how his first gay affair changed his life, like "a black-and-white movie that had suddenly converted to colour". But his argument relies too heavily on generalisations, such as comparing homosexuals to sterile heterosexuals. The truth is that many people do not fit Sullivan's socio-sexual stereotypes. Increasingly, there is no such condition as "normal".



**Romance** by Ed McBain (Coronet, £5.99) Ed McBain's latest 87th Precinct Novel is as about as exciting as an episode of *Murder She Wrote*. Plotting what happens when an actress meets the same fate as the character she is playing in an off-off-Broadway production, McBain spices up the proceedings with a risqué subplot featuring an inter-racial romance between Detective Bert Kling and his beautiful superior, Deputy-Chief Surgeon Sharyn Cooke. Much rain falls, many boudoirs are drunk and many thespians behave campily. A comforting read, if only for the noticeable lack of psycho-killers and frozen body parts.



**Shards of Memory** by Ruth Praver Jhabvala (Penguin, £6.99) It takes a chapter or so to get the generations straight in Praver Jhabvala's latest family saga. The cosmopolitan Kopf family – whose members include Hampstead lesbians, Manhattan matrons, and Indian poets – have always been open-minded, and over four generations have cultivated a relationship with "The Master", a never-ageing spiritual guru with a taste for pretty women. Muddling along in a large NY apartment building, grandparents, parents and children try to make sense of each other's stories. Human weakness studied with a kind and forgiving eye.





# Summer-houses of the imagination

A Czech town asked its most famous son to celebrate its 700th birthday. The result is stunning says Peter Forbes

Supposed to Fly: by Miroslav Holub, trans Ewald Osers, Bloodaxe, £8.95

Miroslav Holub, the Czech poet, immunologist and unofficial urban anthropologist, has produced a book of prose, poems and photographs celebrating his native town of Pilsen, famed for its beer and for being liberated in 1945 by the American Army rather than the Russians. These are the bald facts but convey as much about the true nature of the book as saying that Hamlet is a play about the insecurity of a Danish Prince.

The truth is that Holub is one of those writers who have created a world which, once learnt, can be explored at will by the grateful reader, pottering about among the brick-a-brac of a sardonic collector of well-considered trifles. He has an amazingly retentive mind – stocked with most of the 'ologies, classical and modern – and a brilliant eye for spotting Holubian grotesqueries and jocular humour wherever he goes.

You don't have to care about Pilsen to enjoy this book because Pilsen is really the place we all come from. Holub has the knack of giving commonplace wisdom a twist with a touch of surrealism and exuberantly paced paragraphs: "Not to have come from Pilsen would have been like Hector not being from Troy or Ulysses from Ithaca, so that Telemachus wouldn't be his son and therefore in all probability wouldn't have set out for the Peloponnese to seek news of his dad."

The stories Holub recounts are often what you would expect from any memoir of a writer's birthplace, but he has a great universalising tendency, so that all his situations are both actual and seen through a long lens. "The Summer-house" is about both his family's summer-house and the Summerhouse Tendency, a Platonic yen for creating doomed summer-houses of the fancy: "A summer house is man's great dream, which (in his mind) he draws like a Chinese poet in Indian ink, though in reality he's calculating how many sausages he can buy for Saturday."

If you want to place Holub when he's in this mode you might say that he was a Flann O'Brien who sometimes mutates into Bruno Schulz. Flann O'Brien calibrates the narrow local footbridge according to the gonadotropic status of its users: "For a young lad within the norm this is a footbridge of choice, for here he will realise

that his dimensions are in fact ideal, whereas the sexually mature adults, who incidentally engage in immoral acts beneath the vaulting of the railway bridge, do not have such sensible parameters either coming or going", whilst Miroslav Schulz blows an animating breath around the steam locomotives of the town: "The secret life of steam locomotives is not only intensive but relatively easy to understand, because these engines breathe in and out, with sharp eyes watch the free run of the landscape and reflect on it with white puffs of locomotive awareness".

The communist era which dominated Holub's life receives admirably droll treatment. In "The city under the ground" it features as a cause of much burying of suspect objects: relics of the American liberation, jewellery, the leather case of a Roliflex. The book was commissioned by the town of Pilsen to celebrate its 700th anniversary and it must be the first work of genuine literature to be conceived in such a way.

About this anniversary Holub observes that if Wenceslas the Second, founder of the city, had been a bit quicker off the mark – say seven years – the 700th anniversary celebrations would have been very different, including "the historical discovery that the foundation had really been the idea of the Rurik dynasty in Russia, passed on to Wenceslas II by the merchant Yakov before he was put in the stocks for the sale of fake furs".

According to the conventions of book reviewing, *Supposed to Fly* is the work under scrutiny because it was published very recently, whereas Holub's last book, *The Jingle Bell Principle*, exists in that limbo of books that were once emitted from the presses, to very little notice. But the two should be bought and savoured together. *The Jingle Bell Principle* is a collection of columns, 43 lines long in the original Czech, which Holub contributed to the magazine *Vim*, ranging from the curious elongation of Micky Mouse's face over the decades, to the mythology of books.

These days Prague is on everyone's map. The Czech football team may have been overshadowed in the Euro96 shenanigans by England's renaissance but they still made it to the Final. And if you only take in only one more bit of Czechiana this year, it should be Mr Holub's wayward poetry.



The place we all come from: main square, Pilsen, Czech Republic.

Photograph: Zuzana Minářová

## Marbly limbs and mother's milk

Kate Clanchy traces a modern poetic obsession with "writing the body"

Each generation of poets brings its own preoccupations to its depictions of the body. The Metaphysicals turned their mistresses into maps or diagrams, the late Victorians were obsessed with anything poking out of robes, with warm breath and marbly limbs, Eliot lingered on decay. For today's poets, the body is oozing, breeding, sexual and often examined in scientific detail.

This is partly a feminist project, of course, following French theorist Helen Cixous's famous injunction, to "write the body", and so give a voice to the traditionally silent area of women's physicality and desire. In this area, the American Sharon Olds has been pre-eminent.

Olds remains too little-known in the UK: it is good, therefore, to see her latest collection, *The Wellspring*, brought straight to us in a glamorous gold binding by Cape (£7.00). Readers new to Olds will be astounded not simply by the frankness of poems such as "Celibacy at Twenty" – "I would move as little as possible, the air seemed to press on my skin, my breasts like something broken open, un-capped and not covered" – but also by its effortless, metaphysical movement from the body to a consideration of the nature of human love and what it means to have not yet experienced it.

True Olds fanatics, though, may find *The Wellspring* a little disappointing. The familiar Olds ingredients are all here – the rapt voice, the eroticism, the concern with love and growth – but many of the poems, particularly those about her children's illnesses and her own adolescence, echo her previous work without moving on from it.

Olds is having an increasing influence on poets in this country, as is evident in Neil Rollinson's first collection, *A Spillage of Mercury* (Cape, £7.00). Rollinson too begins with the body, almost prosaically – "I crack the shell/on the bedstead and open it/over your stomach, ("Like the Blowing of Birds Eggs") – then, like Olds, opens the poem up with a daring image, frequently charged with unexpected tenderness: "it moves on your skin like a woman/hurrying on in her yellow dress, the long/transparent train dragging behind".

Eleanor Brown brings more formality to the consideration of sex in her debut collection, *Maiden Speech* (Bloodaxe, £6.95). The central section comprises no fewer than fifty sonnets about a love affair. This Shakespearean scheme adds a surprisingly modern edge to the sequence: there's space to consider the affair, and the act of writing about it, from many points of view, while the taut, echoing form adds an anxious, obsessive tone to meditations, and bite and wit to intimate descriptions: "I laugh in climax and you ask me why (jaws locked around my loosened consciousness/as though at such a time I might be less inclined to weigh my words, or tell a lie – and I appreciate it's worth a try)".

The body seems to be a fruitful area for Brown: this sequence, and some

love poems based on musical forms, are the strongest parts of the book. Elsewhere, Brown applies craft and care, but less freshness and imagination, to monologues in the voices of various hard-done-by female classical literary characters – though originality is difficult in this increasingly popular genre.

Male poets expressing their feelings about fatherhood is a more genuinely new area for poetry – though it is noticeable that many of them continue to write about female bodies, albeit fertilised instead of eroticised, rather than their own. Many of Tom Pow's most successful poems in *Red-Letter Day* (Bloodaxe, £7.95), for example, move away from his exploration of place into the intimate, dangerous territory of his wife's body.

Even W.N. Herbert, one of the most restlessly and relentlessly clever of the New Generation poets, enters this territory in his new collection *Cabaret McGonagall* (Bloodaxe, £7.95), and also

finds rich rewards. "Featherhood" is a deeply moving meditation on a failed IVF treatment in which the image of eggs detaching themselves from the womb is connected to feathers flying away in the wind "Sae licht this lives that laive us/or griefs maun growe instead... Ut is your braith/ That blows thi feathers o thi wurdz/by me and awa".

Fans of the brusquer, more satirical Herbert may be reassured to learn that this poem is an exception. Herbert's cast of ferocious Scottish grotesques are alive and well and dancing in the anti-cabaret of the title poem. As usual, Herbert divides his writing between English and his own part-vernacular, part-McDairmid versions of Scots. The Scots poems are knottier, but also more finished and satisfying, as if, in trawling through ancient dictionaries of his tongue, Herbert has found the same microscopic complex perspective that he and many others of his generation have brought to the cells of the body.

It's ridiculous to assume that this work cancels, out-dates, or even opposes poetry like that of, say, Carol Ann Duffy or Peter Reading. It doesn't relate to the same canon. There is no claim that all radically innovative work is better than all conservative work. There are good and bad radicals just as there are fine and dire conservatives. It is true, though, to say that the finest art is that which penetrates new areas of sensibility, minting new language out of necessity.

This is true of Joan Retallack and Catriona Strang in "Out of Everywhere", of Barry McSweeney, Bill Griffiths and Douglas Oliver in "Pilots of Chaos", and of Maggie O'Sullivan, Geraldine Monk and Denise Riley who are found in both anthologies.

Sinclair admits to his admissions. It is odd that he did not want to include Dylan Thomas or Basil Bunting. Tom Raworth was allowed to exclude himself. There should be some Bob Cobbing and some Eric Mottram, to whom Sinclair's book is dedicated. The modesty whereby Sinclair excludes himself is false.

But these are negligible grouches. Work of this vitality and in such plenitude has not been evident in the UK since the 19th century and the best of these poets, if they are to be understood, are to be understood in these dimensions.

On the evidence of *Atlantis*, every word of the rapturous praise that greeted *My Alexandria* was warranted. George Mackay Brown's *Following A Lark* (John Murray, £8.99) is as elegiac as Doty because he died after it went to press. It is particularly affecting that the two *urtes poeticae* the book fin-

ishes with have such a valedictory air to them:

"To have got so far, alone  
Almost to the sevenfold stone  
Is a wonder...  
The road winds uphill, but  
A wonder will be to sit  
On the stone at last –  
One star in the west."

The themes here are familiar; there are two more "Stations of the Cross" amid Brown's unhectored Catholic-Christian world; his cast of local characters, like Ikey the tinker, are paraded again. And his mysterious capacity to fill with vigour and colour what is, in worldly terms, a dying society has never been stronger.

No two societies could be more different than the Athenian-urban of Doty's New York and Brown's Boeothian Orkneys; yet there are all kinds of elegiac similarities. Brown wears the city as clothing, as Doty wears the city; both use beached and wrecked boats as figures of life-in-death. The explanation of what they share is clear: as elegists, they both (like Yeats) find the taste of life sharpened by transience. But what they have in common even more fundamentally is that they are two of the best poets of our time.



Mackay Brown: vigour and colour

John Kinsella published four volumes of poetry in Australia between 1991 and 1995, but *The Undertow: New and Selected Poems* (Arc, £7.95) which draws on them, is his first published in England. In introducing him, Michael Hulse uses the distinction made by Kinsella's fellow-Australian Les Murray between the Athenian mode of urban sophistication and the Boeothian of rural plainness. Some such distinction is essential in characterising Kinsella, given the difference between his approachable country poems of parrots and tiger-moths, and the extremely resistant (the word "post-modernist" offers itself as a categorical escape-clause) sequence "Szygy". The place to start is the third of the book's four sections "The Silo" where poems like "Rock Picking: Building Cairns" (memorably called "these rowdy cities") have some of the unforced reverie quality of Frost. The fourth section, of new poems, is again difficult. It is a curious kind of difficulty too; not the tight scroll which can be unrolled by intellectual application, but an energetic verbal tumult.

Fergus Allen is decidedly on the

Athenian side of Murray's divide. The geographical scope of *Who Goes There?* (Faber, £6.99) extends even beyond the blurb's rather alarming claim that "the poems range in setting from Europe, India and Africa to the Moon." His historical sweep is often ambitious, as in the casual reference to "the Winter Palace / That October". Indeed both kinds of poem – the real geographical, like the fine "Ancestors and Refugees", and the pseudo-anthropological such as "The Factotum" – are best when they have a clear and serious application. The poems are elegantly formed and verbally adroit but seem to confirm Allen as a poet of considerable technical skills who hasn't quite decided what his main subject is, despite impressive successes in several styles.

Since the dramatic impact last year of *Atlantis* (Cape, £7.00), his first book published in England, there has been little doubt about Mark Doty's central concerns. That book was largely about the effect of his partner's terminal illness on the writer's capacity to view the world. The extraordinary thing was the positive sensuousness of that evocation in the light of tragedy. This is the main

subject of *Atlantis* too; and my impression after several readings is that this is an even more powerful and accomplished book than its predecessor. The title-sequence takes the legend of the submerged city of Atlantis to represent the way a lost past can hold meanings for an emerging future, through dreams and memories. The distinction of Doty's writing is nearly impossible to describe because he has a Midas touch: his easy voice seems to bring weight to all subjects and to survive every risk, from the refusal to mourn the transience of flowers, to the central mourning of friends who died young. His writing is invariably up to the demands of the life-and-death subjects he deals with; the very last words of *Atlantis*, at the end of the "Notes", are "O World I cannot hold these close enough". Note how his light teleology shares Elizabeth Bishop's gift of imbuing what seems to be simple description with metaphorical force:

Here, curving out to the farthest reaches, the breakwater's a canopy of huge stones. Hard to think these were placed, these drowsy, inland boulders awakened, all century, by the seawater's moon-driven alarm. ("Breakwater")

## Tactics of disarray

Understanding modern poetry is not the point, says Jeff Nuttall

Conductors of Chaos: a Poetry Anthology, ed Iain Sinclair  
Picador, £9.99

*Conductors of Chaos* doesn't pretend to be a comprehensive anthology. Sinclair calls it "a compromise" in his wondrously scabrous introduction – "a scratch selection hoping to transform itself into something more than the sum of its disparate parts." Sinclair doesn't trust anthologies ("At their worst," he says, "anthologies are lies"), nor claim to understand the work he likes. But he likes having it around.

In this anthology and in the recent *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry By Women in North America and the UK* (edited by Maggie O'Sullivan, Reality Street, £9.00) there is a substantial body of work written over the last 40 years by over 50 poets. In its volume and its seriousness of practice it is at least equal to, and almost totally separate from, the body of poetry that the literary establishment acknowledges. Why then, if its presence is so strong and durable, does it remain obscure? The answer is simple: nobody, including Iain Sinclair, can understand it.

In the face of such a substantial literary phenomenon, such simplicity is suspect. Should that "can" be "will"? Is understanding the name of the game anyway? Is participation, appreciation or enjoyment a more appropriate approach? Certainly these lines from Bill Griffiths – "the slim pea / beautiful rides bikes-plant fence mensefully / brave seems lady-pod / waves / flapping pink in colour / grapple" – would seem to indicate that neither F.R. Leavis nor I.A. Richards, with all his resources of Practical Criticism, won't help us here. "Why should it be easy?" asks Sinclair. "Why should it not reflect some measure of the complexity of the climate in which it (and we) exist? There is no key, no masonic password; take the sequence gently, a line at a time. Treat the page as a block, sound it for submerged sonic. Suspend conditioned reflexes."

This poetry, says O'Sullivan, "does not represent a familiar world and therefore cannot be read in the familiar way." Wendy Mulford, who writes the Afterword to O'Sullivan's collection, describes the work as "lexical tactics of disarray" – "a web of signs whose primary interest is not in translating experience into writing."

This is poetry that denies objectivity – its usefulness, its reliability, even its morality. It thrives in the climate that holds the distanced dispassionate viewpoint to be an authoritarian strategy. Its values are musical rather than explanatory. Its forms are simultaneous and concentric rather than vertical or linear. It is no accident that so many of these poets are involved in visual art and music.

It's ridiculous to assume that this work cancels, out-dates, or even opposes poetry like that of, say, Carol Ann Duffy or Peter Reading. It doesn't relate to the same canon. There is no claim that all radically innovative work is better than all conservative work. There are good and bad radicals just as there are fine and dire conservatives. It is true, though, to say that the finest art is that which penetrates new areas of sensibility, minting new language out of necessity.

This is true of Joan Retallack and Catriona Strang in "Out of Everywhere", of Barry McSweeney, Bill Griffiths and Douglas Oliver in "Pilots of Chaos", and of Maggie O'Sullivan, Geraldine Monk and Denise Riley who are found in both anthologies.

Sinclair admits to his admissions. It is odd that he did not want to include Dylan Thomas or Basil Bunting. Tom Raworth was allowed to exclude himself. There should be some Bob Cobbing and some Eric Mottram, to whom Sinclair's book is dedicated. The modesty whereby Sinclair excludes himself is false.

But these are negligible grouches. Work of this vitality and in such plenitude has not been evident in the UK since the 19th century and the best of these poets, if they are to be understood, are to be understood in these dimensions.



## country

## Before church clocks, there were sundials

And if you look hard you can still see them. By Clive Fewins

You have just walked past another one. The words rang out in a crisp voice coming from the gravestones behind me.

We were at the 12th-century St Peter's Church in Hanwell near Banbury in Oxfordshire. According to Edward Martin, my companion for the day, its walls have just about the finest collection of medieval scratch dials, or mass dials, to be seen on the outside of any country church in the land.

For Mr Martin, these odd arrangements of medieval graffiti have a magnetic appeal. He has been a mass dial addict for 16 years – ever since he was musing on mortality outside the church in which his son was to be married and spotted some odd scratchings on the ancient stones.

It was the first of some 800 of these primitive time-telling devices that he has subsequently pored over and meticulously recorded.

Today Mr Martin heads a team of 10 volunteers, all members of the British Sundial Society, who spend their leisure hours peering at mass dials, most of which are almost invisible to the untrained eye.

In all but a tiny handful of cases the gnomon – the metal rod that casts the sun's shadow – has disappeared, making it doubly hard to spot the tiny scratches that mark the site of these early timepieces.

As the name suggests, the dials were used to tell the times of mass. But that is just about all that the experts agree on. Mr Martin and his team are forming a variety of theories as to the other uses of the dials – mainly because they are so varied in style and because there are still so many they have not fully recorded.

"The accepted wisdom has been that there are about 2,000 mass dials scratched on the walls of old churches around the country. My estimate is that there are nearer 5,000. We have recorded well over 2,000 and have hardly touched some counties," Mr Martin said.

As I peered at what appeared to be a blank, flaking section of stone wall, trying to spot a mere handful of the 12 mass dials I had been told were on the south

wall of the chancel of the church, I heard a loud "whoopie" from the nearby south porch.

Inside, an excited Mr Martin had rediscovered the faintest outline of a multi-ringed dial – a type that he regarded as more of a means of checking the calendar than telling the time of mass. "It's a beauty," he said.

But inside a church porch, where the sun never shines? "Sometimes the porch was built after the mass dial was scratched into the wall," said a beaming Mr Martin. Easy.

"Studying mass dials can be a bit New-Agey at times," he concedes. "Some of the scratchings you find, like many of the grotesque carvings found on early churches, smack of the days when many Christians had not quite forsaken their beliefs in the earth goddess and other pagan elements."

Yet I am sure that many of the more sophisticated of these dials were really quite elaborate devices. I believe some of the calendar dials were put on churches simply because they were the only buildings that had dressed stone good enough to carve on. I also think that some of them are so precisely

calculated that the sun would catch certain precise markings on the surface of the dial only on a particular day of the year, such as saints' days.

And if that day should be a dull one? "Ah, then the dial will not work," he said. "That is one reason why clockwork gradually superseded sundials as a means of telling the time in the mid-15th century."

"If you go searching for mass dials do not confuse them with bench marks, used to denote height above sea level. These can look like early mass dials but are generally very low down and cut much deeper. Don't expect to find mass dials on town churches – pollution, the elements and alterations to the buildings did away with most of them many years ago."

Edward Martin can be contacted at West Lodge, Thicknall Lane, Clent, Worcestershire DY9 0HJ. The British Sundial Society is at Bamcroft, Grizebeck, Kirby-in-Furness, Cumbria LA17 7XJ



Photograph: Brian Harris



## A wild and salty secret of Britain's seashores

Sampshire is one of our last uncultivated foods, but gathering it is a tricky business. By Daniel Butler

Peter Jordan positively drools at the thought of his first sampshire-picking expedition of the year: "My grandfather was a real enthusiast for any food that was free and he taught me to appreciate the wonderful flavours of wild crops – sampshire is one of the best."

Today Mr Jordan runs a wild mushroom business, but as a former pub landlord and restaurateur he is well placed to expand on its virtues. "Sampshire is particularly good with fish," he says. "But for me it is best lightly steamed, sautéed with finely chopped potato and crab and then liquidised with cream to produce a delicately flavoured soup. When I ran a pub I couldn't make enough of the stuff."

For those unfamiliar with the vivid green shoots that are starting to appear in profusion along much of our coast, the delicate, salty taste of sampshire is the perfect accompaniment to fish. The fleshy forked stems of this relative of the parsley are often compared with asparagus, but unlike the latter, sampshire is still uncultivated. As a result, supplies still have to be gathered by hand from the seashore, making it – with the possible exception of mushrooms – the last wild crop to be commercially exploited in Britain.

Not surprisingly the trade is an old one, with sampshire having been harvested for centuries not only as a food but also as a source of chemicals. Until the last century huge quantities were collected and burnt

to produce an ash particularly rich in sodium. This formed an important raw material in the manufacture of soap and glass – hence sampshire's alternative name of glasswort.

Today the trade is continued by a handful of fishermen and shore workers who supplement their summer income by picking the green flush springing up from the coastal mud. These part-time pickers are reluctant to discuss their activities because the income is rarely mentioned to the tax man. In addition, there's a legal question. Although, unlike much of our native flora, gathering sampshire is not specifically banned under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act, its marshland habitat is frequently protected. "Most people are careful about picking sampshire now," says John Griffin, manager of Gurney's fishmongers in North Norfolk's Burnham Market. "Almost all the coast round here is part of some nature reserve or another and there's a £200 fine if you're caught with more than a couple of pounds worth of a permit," he says.

In fact, although a handful of professionals apply for licences, many pickers regard the rules as an infringement of their traditional shore rights and flout them. A more important reason for the reticence, however, is their instinctive reluctance to reveal the secrets of what is effectively money for a freely available plant. "I don't want to give away my tricks – if I do every one will be at it," explains one picker.

His fears seem a little unrealistic, however, in spite of the high prices charged by many fishmongers. "The best beds are in muddy creeks, so you either need a boat or have to put on waders up to your armpits," says Mr Griffin. "I can't imagine many of my customers wanting to do either."

Even so, because of the profusion of sampshire growing locally, he doesn't feel able to ask for more than £1.10 per pound. But in London, the unusual and delicate flavour commands a premium price tag. Islington fishmonger Steve Hatt, for example, charges £1.75 per half-pound bag – a figure that makes Norfolk locals collapse with mirth.

In addition to the difficulties of obtaining a regular legal supply, one excuse for the high prices is the extremely variable nature of the crop. This is largely dependent on spring rainfall – which explains why this year's harvest is abnormally late. "Usually we'd start selling sampshire in early June, but this year it's three weeks behind," says Mr Griffin.

From now on, however, he expects to do a roaring trade with the growing number of gastronomically adventurous holiday makers, although he says the backbone of demand still comes from local pensioners. "The older folk have eaten it all their lives and love it – they look forward to the first sampshire of the year just as much as the first new potato or the first strawberry," he says.

## Sampshire – a foodie's view

Since sampshire grows in the wild, it has a restricted growing season. And this is well worth adhering to: by September sampshire is downright fibrous – June to August are usually the prime months when the plant is plentiful and also tender.

It is a vegetable that enjoys a certain cachet. You find it in good fishmongers and occasionally in delicatessens, but it is unlikely ever to reach the supermarket shelves. You should buy the wild plant – if you come across cultivated imports, avoid them.

Sampshire is a surprisingly durable vegetable and it will keep in a paper bag in the bottom of the fridge for some days. It won't wilt on you, at most it will begin to turn sludgy in places and the offending fronds can simply be picked out.

To eat, sampshire is delectable. The fronds are plump, with a concentrated salinity that comes direct from the brackish waters that feed it. And it is this that makes the cooked vegetable such a good match for fish.

Like asparagus, sampshire does not require huge dressing up: blanched briefly and dressed with butter is the optimum treatment. It also makes a delicious contrast to the sweetness of ratatouille. True enthusiasts, though, will settle for sampshire with a plate of buttered brown bread. Whatever, once tasted, never forgotten.

Annie Bell

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## Good things that come in smallish boxes

Fifty-eight white cardboard boxes are laid out on the packing bench along the centre of the shed, each inscribed with the name of a customer in bold blue letters. Up and down the line ranges Mike Fisher, doling out organic vegetables harvested earlier in the day: three pounds of new potatoes dug an hour ago, onions, young carrots, courgettes, cucumbers, flat French beans, lettuce.

Mike is not yet quite at the stage of talking to his plants but sometimes, he admits, he is not far off it. A lean, wiry fellow of 36, he is in his first year as a full-time grower, and he is making a go of it – but only by dint of long hours and the hardest of graft.

He bought his site – a 12-acre field high on the Hampshire downs – in 1991, when land prices were low, and began to cultivate part of it in his spare time. He was then working at the historic, water-powered silk mill in Whitechurch, where he maintained the machinery, and he kept his job there for the time being.

In 1994 he launched his box scheme, delivering fresh vegetables once a week to 30 households in his immediate area. Such was the response that by last year he had 60 customers, and he cut down his work at the mill to three days a week. Then, last December, he gave it up altogether and went into growing full-time.



## DUFF HART-DAVIS

He is now taking out 110 boxes a week, and living on-site. He is up and out at 7am every morning to open the polythene tunnels which house some of the crops, and he works at least a 12-hour day. One major expense has been the installation of a bore-hole, which gives him enough water for trickle irrigation: the drilling, pump and so on cost £4,000. Apart from that, he has equipped himself on the cheap, picking up an old tractor and a few implements at farm sales. His long packing shed was once a battery-hen house which he himself brought from another site and rebuilt.

His success has been due largely to word of mouth, but he also benefits from being a member of the Soil Association, which

publishes an annual directory of farm shops and box schemes, and puts potential buyers in touch with growers. The corollary is that his holding is inspected once a year to make sure that he is not using any artificial fertilisers, herbicides or pesticides.

On the contrary: his aim is to maintain his ground in the best possible condition by natural means – manure, compost and careful rotation of crops. The organic tag is certainly a help; but what seems to attract customers most is sheer freshness, and the fact that vegetables are delivered. Several people are so enthusiastic that they have designated themselves "collectors": in Basingstoke, for instance, there are three who receive a dozen boxes apiece, for friends and neighbours to pick up. This year, for the first time, several people paid for a whole season's boxes in advance, putting up over £200 per household to provide the grower with a bit of working capital.

Many customers say the scheme has changed the way they plan their menus. Not only does it encourage them to eat more vegetables: it also makes them cook more, and rely less on packets.

Meanwhile, out at the ranch, this Friday's boxes are nearly full. They are of three values – £8, £6 and £4 – however, Mike's aim

is that all should look "abundant and good value". He reckons that the cost is about the same as that of conventional produce in a supermarket.

None of the vegetables is washed or individually packed: the carrots go in cheek by jowl with the potatoes, and a handful of parsley on top of them. Nor are most portions weighed: after putting one pound of mushrooms on the scales, Mike deals out the rest by eye.

Nobody, he says, complains that the goods are not presented in hygienically sealed in bags. Nobody has any guarantee about what each box is going to contain, and he likes to include at least one surprise. This week the novelty is kohlrabi, a form of brassica root.

At the last moment he pops out to one of the polythene tunnels to cut baskets full of basil and coriander. Topped up with a generous bunch of each, the boxes go into the delivery van smelling irresistibly exotic.

And does he eat the stuff himself? "Tons of it," he says happily. But then, you guessed it: he's a vegetarian.

The directory of farm shops and box schemes is available from the Soil Association, 86 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB (0117 929 0661)



# How about a Late Show for plant lovers?

Kirsty Fergusson suggests a radical new programme on gardening

Every spring the lengthening days and promise of balmy summer evenings produce a heady sense of anticipation in plant-minded people. The long winter dormancy of Britain's hardest perennial is over, and it is starting new growth: Geoff Hamilton is back on the air. At 8.30 every Friday evening, from late spring until the end of the summer, more than six million people lay down their tools, hang up their wellies and settle down in front of BBC 2's *Gardeners' World*.

For sheer professionalism you have to hand it to Geoff Hamilton. Now there's a man, you can't help thinking, who knows how to handle a spade. And not only that; he has the enviable ability to impart just the right amount of information even as he digs. Blokeish without being laddish, informed without being superior, Hamilton pitches himself neatly between Desmond Lynam and David Attenborough in terms of likeable accessibility.

Apart from *Gardeners' World*, there are more than 11 hours of garden broadcasting available every week during the peak gardening months. The quality of these programmes is pretty varied, but in terms of their basic formula they are utterly homogeneous.

This is what happens: a camera crew and jolly bunch of presenters roll up to a garden; the garden (grand or humble, in its prime or in dire need of help) is inspected; there follows a brief interview with the owner or the gardener, supplemented with comment or advice from the presenter(s); more shots of the garden and then everyone goes home or on to the next garden.

Gardening programmes, it would appear, are the undisputed territory of what is known in telly speak as the OB – the Outside Broadcast. And why not? Gardens are, after all, outdoor creations, so what on earth would be the point of having a group of presenters standing around indoors talking about something that was outside? It just

wouldn't make sense. Or would it?

Forget the Outside Broadcast. Forget the woolly jumpers and wellies. Imagine instead a studio, decorated simply with two or three huge reproductions of Howard Sooley's photographic plant portraits. A presenter, unashamedly in the *Late Show* style (a horticultural Michael Ignatieff or Sarah Dunnant is what we are looking for – we are not talking Alan Titchmarsh) introduces three guests, each an expert on the subjects up for discussion: each with something to say in a forthright and informed manner on each other's topics, too. Argument and information would flow in lively debate. There would be a limited use of exquisite and strictly pertinent still photographs in order to illustrate a point or a plant.

The subjects discussed each week would fall into three main areas: firstly, a polemical horticultural issue, such as the wisdom of restoring historic gardens or the future of the Lindley Library would be thrashed out. Next, each guest would present a choice plant which they thought deserved better recognition or to be brought into wider cultivation. And lastly, a book – or books – chosen by the presenter would be reviewed by each of the guests. Like the plants, some of the books chosen would be new on the gardening shelves, others would be old classics, long overdue for reappraisal.

I think there would have to be a competition, too, open to all. The purpose would be to encourage new ground to be broken in the pursuit of imaginative design – a sort of Turner Prize for the garden. Some of the submissions would be outrageous, and letters would be written; questions raised in the House of Commons.

In short, the aim of the programme (called *Talking Plants* perhaps) would be to present gardening as an art. The presentation of gardening as craft would be left in Geoff Hamilton's capable hands. And one last thing – it would be on

late (not before 10pm), because then you wouldn't have to come in from the garden while the evening is still light.

So what would make this programme work? Two things have emerged from the explosion of interest in gardening over the last decade. In the first place, gardening has got younger. It's not the new rock 'n' roll, but there are far more people in their twenties and thirties with dirt under their fingernails and copies of *The Plant Finder* by their telephones than ever before. Channel 4 has cottoned on to this, with brave attempts to secure a younger audience with programmes such as *Dig* and *Garden Party*. But the irritatingly casual, slightly off-beat approach of these programmes nevertheless continues to stress the craft rather than the art of gardening. Older gardeners feel alienated; younger gardeners feel bored or patronised.

This is because, in the second place, gardening has got more sophisticated. Amateur gardeners are more demanding of themselves, their plants and their gardens. It is rather similar to the way our attitude to cooking has altered since the Fifties. Millions of people have graduated from a diet of meat and two veg and are willing to experiment with new ideas and ingredients. Supermarkets stock things that would have been found only in Soho delicatessens 10 or 15 years ago. Gardeners, too, want similar opportunities to give thoughtful expression to their creativity.

As yet, there is no forum on television for gardening gourmets or iconoclasts, yet their numbers are growing. There are horticultural Gary Rhodes and Damien Hirst out there whose work needs to be challenged and debated; there is an establishment that needs to be assaulted and defended; and there are some fantastic plants that deserve to be better known.

Six million people watch *Gardeners' World* every week. But I bet there are another six million gardeners who don't.

Anna Pavord returns next week



## Around the world in eighty paces

In an unlikely corner of south east London there's a multi-cultural garden with big ambitions. By Gina Cowen

This summer, if you find yourself in the starkly depressing corner of south-east London between Elephant and Castle and Peckham, take heart. Next to some of the highest density council estates in Europe – a tough, bleak environment – there is a vast expanse of open ground. This is Burgess Park, the largest area of metropolitan open land created in London since the war. The grass has turned brown in the summer dryness. But in this wide, flat urban desert there is a little oasis: Chumleigh Gardens.

It is a small garden set around charming Victorian almshouses that once housed "The Friendly Female Asylum for aged persons who have seen better

days". Neo-Gothic windows look out upon the essential English lawn set with weeping cherry trees, surrounded by herbaceous borders and studded with formal pots and wooden benches. Take a pew and possibly a novel by Mrs Gaskell. Or explore.

Through an iron gateway in the corner is the Oriental garden complete with Japanese rock pool and a palpable sense of eastern calm. Further on, there's an African and Caribbean garden with tree ferns, arum lilies, red hot poker. A few feet on, comes the Islamic garden with azure-blue geometric tiling surrounding an ornamental pond in whose centre grows a jelly palm. Finally, there's a Mediterranean garden basking in the

sporadic British sun with a young olive (a clone from the tree in the Chelsea Physic Garden), herbs, grapes (the first crop was picked last year) and a pinetree.

That's it. This multi-cultural garden is laid out in a space not much larger than a few tennis courts. See the world in 80 paces.

The almshouses are now the headquarters for Southwark's Parks Ranger Service. You could call this a phoenix from the fire of radical revision. Five years ago there were 400 parks staff in Southwark borough, tending 120 parks and public spaces. Government cuts and compulsory competitive tendering (all grounds maintenance is now with private contractors) brought about an interim Parks Warden Service, decreased in number and demoralised. Chumleigh Gardens was born around this time, the seeds being sown by two European Community Heritage Campuses held at Burgess Park in 1992 and 1993.

Students attending the sessions here carried out extensive surveys with the local residents and came up with the idea for a multi-cultural walled garden. They drew up a report plus designs, and the following year came back to plant the English garden. Extensive funding had gone into this floral flagship both from Southwark Council and from Brussels but initially it floundered.

Then, in 1994, the Parks Ranger Service emerged, re-emerging the role of a trimmed-down parks workforce (now 50 for the whole of Southwark) and with a dynamic Principal Parks Officer in Stephen Harrison. Chumleigh Gardens became a new little Kew. It now also has a visitors' centre, a community-run café, community room and conference facilities. Education has a high profile, with more than 2,000 schoolchildren having already paid visits.

Though officially opened only a year ago, Chumleigh Gardens is already internationally recognised. Stephen Harrison, as well as Christine Wildhaber – a New Zealand horticulturalist running the education programme – will be

guest speakers this autumn in New York at the Third International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens. By that time, progress should be well on the way for a nursery and garden centre, an indoor greenhouse area (to include a major collection of carnivorous plants), an Asian garden, multi-cultural allotments, artists workshops and a demonstration garden (plants against politics?). Here's a little garden with big ambitions.

Multi-cultural Gardens, Chumleigh St, Burgess Park, London SE5 (0171-277 4068). Open to the public 2-4pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. Admission free

## The Dame Edna of the shrub world

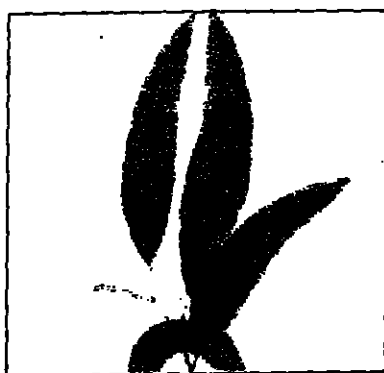
Big and brash, the eucalyptus demands to be admired – and controlled. By Anna McKane

Gardeners either love them or loathe them. Eucalyptuses are admired by some for their coloured bark and exotic-looking leaves, but for the purist whose perfect garden consists of lavender and pale old-fashioned roses, the eucalyptus is the equivalent of Dame Edna Everage. Like her, they come from Australia, and are big and brash.

They are eye-catching, and look harmless enough to anyone who does not know them. But beware. If unpruned, in three or four years a eucalyptus can grow to 20 feet, and in 10 years it could reach a massive 50 or 60 feet. The bright silver leaves will have turned a rather dull greyish-green, and as a final insult, if there is a gale your eucalyptus might easily come crashing down.

The speed at which they grow may be a benefit, of course, if the idea is to hide an unsightly building. But if the aim is to keep the bright silvery leaves, eucalyptuses have to be pruned very carefully.

There are 600 or so different types in Australasia, but about 12 are reliably hardy in this country. In most of these, the juvenile leaves are quite different from the adult ones. They are often silver, coppery-pink, or edged with red, and are very popular with flower-arrangers. But the plant has to be coppiced or pollarded every year to produce these leaves.



Photograph: Arden

Dr James Smart, of Marwood Hill Gardens near Barnstaple in Devon – who grows about 15 different varieties – recommends cutting eucalyptus trees back by about a third to a half every autumn or spring. This will have the advantage of encouraging strong roots, which will help the tree withstand strong winds. After three or four years, the plant can be pollarded at a chosen height, perhaps about six feet, to ensure that it produces the attractive leaves.

Alternatively, the plant can be coppiced, cutting it down to 18 inches or less every spring. It will then produce a mound of new leaves, that can be cut for indoor decoration during the win-

ter, before the whole thing is coppiced again the following spring.

There is a thriving industry – mostly in the West Country – of growers with acres of coppiced eucalyptus producing foliage for the cut-flower trade. The current favourite for this is *E. parvifolia*, which produces small green leaves on red stems and is often seen around Christmas. *E. gunnii*, with its round silver leaves, is also popular. Its leaves preserve well, if they are stood in a mixture of glycerine and water.

Andrew McConnell, of Celyn Vale Nurseries in North Wales, grows 40 different types of eucalyptus and sends out around 100,000 young trees each year. He explained that the ability of a tree to withstand frost depends on how cold the region is where the parent plant grows. Seeds from a tree growing in an area where there are regular cold frosts will produce offspring which can stand equivalent frosts.

Among the hardiest, he says, are *E. niphophila*, which has brightly coloured snakeskin bark, *E. gunnii*, *E. pauciflora*, which also has a mottled trunk, *E. parvifolia*, *E. perniand*, whose young glaucous leaves encircle the stem, and *E. coccifera*, which has peeling grey-and-white bark.

Celyn Vale Nurseries, Carrog, Conwen, Cwyd LL21 9LD (01490 430671)

## gardening

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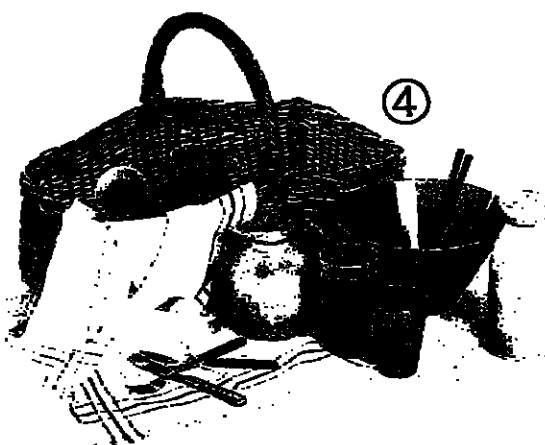




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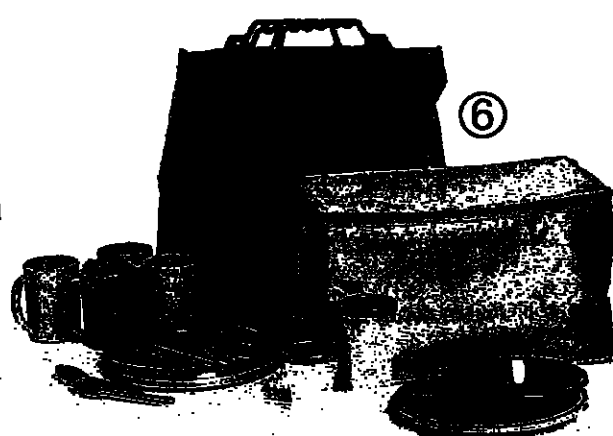
**5** Liberty stocks different sized empty picnic hampers with straps and compartments to secure all contents, like this chunky willow basket at £99. A new wave of kitsch has even hit the smartest London stores and amongst it all you will find a range of light alloy vessels made by Bombay Duck. Beakers and bowls around £5, tray, jug, cocktail shaker and wine cooler all around £20. All come in four rich colours: gold, emerald green, ruby red and sapphire blue. Liberty, Regent Street, W1, 0171-734 1234.



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Stylist: Rose Hammick  
Photographer: Tony Buckingham




**Louise Levene**

**N**ow here's a surprise: 60 per cent of women find car advertising patronising (the other 40 per cent were too busy deciding what colour they wanted). Apparently we'd all prefer the advertisers to concentrate on useful things like mileage and acceleration. What we don't want are cheap fantasies about mothers of twins still finding energy for a service while spreadeagled across the bonnet of the family estate. Ads like this are an insult to the intelligence and have no impact on our rational choice of car. A likely story. If the day ever dawns when a group of consumers admit that advertising plays a part in their purchasing decisions I will eat my Mercedes. Of course they denied it - 80 per cent of birds probably claim to find scarecrows unconvincing. Nobody wants to look stupid. Helen Bell, Managing Partner of Ammirati Puris Littas which has the Rover account, summarises the central problem with this kind of "research": "There is a natural resistance to enjoying an ad. People resent doing something that their common sense tells them they shouldn't. A car is a major purchase. People aren't going to admit they were influenced by a mere ad. They'll say 'I buy a car because it's reliable' but advertising is a much earlier part of the decision making process. All advertising does is raise awareness of the car. You don't sell cars off TV ads. You show them something that looks quite nice, then they go into the showroom and check the size of the boot." As for the survey's finding that 80 per cent of women want more nerdy statistics, the advertising industry knows better: "If you ran an ad that said 'Cor! look at this bootspace!' they wouldn't be seduced by it. The old argument used to run 'Women want to see themselves in ads' but you don't necessarily want to see yourself putting the Sainsbury's bags in the back. You've got to create a piece of entertainment". And it works. It must do - why else would car manufacturers spend £200m a year on TV campaigns alone? Although women will always claim to hate the ads they are still suckers for the punchlines. Volkswagen's mini-drama featuring a jubilant divorcee got a lot of Family Values flak but VW estimated that it added 37,000 sales. You may fail to identify with two slags on a fly-drive holiday (Peugeot), you may sneer at Baby Nicole and the car that Papa bought (Renault) and you may wonder why a sensible looking girl would get shackled up with a hypercritical, back-seat driving oaf who borrows her lingerie (Fiat) but you've got to buy something. Boycotting a good car because you hate the way it's promoted is even less rational than falling for the hype.

**Louise Levene**

Fax: 0171 293 2505

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# Working on glass

Simon Moore and Ben Dunnington insist that glassmaking is an awful job — and they love it. By Charlotte Packer

It is one of the hottest days this year, and Simon Moore's small glass-blowing workshop in Stockwell is arguably the hottest place in London, if not the country. In one corner a furnace is ticking over at a steady 1080 degrees, and although the double doors are thrown open and fans are whirring, the heat is stifling. Simon is making glass table legs and each one is taking ten minutes. Slow going, apparently. Could it be the heat? "God no — this is nothing. The only thing which really affects my glass making is how hungover I am when I get in."

Watching Simon blowing glass is like witnessing a cross between a religious ceremony and a magic show. One minute there is nothing but an iron wand and a crucible of liquid glass, and the next a treacherous bubble is being caressed into shape with the aid of a wooden palate and a scorched wad of *The Sunday Times*: "I don't know why, but I find it's the best newspaper for the job". Assistants shuttle between the furnace and Simon's creation, anointing it with decorative blobs of coloured glass which are then massaged into place.

Simon has been making glass for seventeen years and says he's "reasonably proficient" at it, though his ambition — to take his company, Simon Moore London Ltd, to the point where it is regarded as the best in the country — suggests he's a little better than that. In the last five years alone he has steered his business from a small operation, dependent on restoration work for over 50 per cent of its income, to an international business with a weekly output of over 800 items, and an annual turnover in excess of £250,000. The company is already renowned in America for the classic and decorative tableware designed by Simon and his co-director Ben Dunnington. A similar following in the UK is not far off thanks to Liberty, the Conran Shop and Contemporary Applied Arts (CAA).

The time has come for them to move to a larger workshop. The new set-up will allow Simon and Ben to take on more assistants, creating more time for new designs and one-off commissions, such as the recent collaboration with architect Nigel Coates: "He faxed us a whole lot of rough shapes for some decorative vases for a shop he was working on in Tokyo." The results — large organic vessels in citrus-coloured frosted glass — pleased both architect and glass makers so much that more projects are in the pipeline.

The new workshop is dominated by two furnaces which Simon has just built himself. Each one represents two tons of refractory concrete and will take at least 10 days to heat up. They cost £9,200, but Simon knows they will earn their keep with reduced gas bills over the coming years.



Watching Simon Moore blowing glass is like witnessing a cross between a religious ceremony and a magic show

Overhead there is a huge extractor fan to keep the workers cool. "I don't like the thought of my staff slowing down because they are too warm," he explains, only half joking. "We cost everything by the minute," he says explaining several times that his is a business done for money not love. During the course of the afternoon it becomes clear that this is not strictly true: only a masochist would make glass purely for the money.

For a start there is the failure rate. Even

skilled glassworkers have accidents, and Simon reckons they lose about two pieces a day. Not much, you might think, but at two jugs a day worth £23 they've said goodbye to a considerable wad of cash within a couple of months. Also, imperfections in the glass often conceal themselves until it's too late. Clear glass can be melted down and used again — but not coloured. "I did try to recycle it, but it ended up looking like the very worst kind of 'art' glass," explains

Simon. This is his pet hate, glass that claims to be "art" or "quirky".

"It's the sort of glass which comes from the point in glassmaker's training when he or she realises that they're crap, so they become glass 'artists'." Luckily for Ben and Simon, in America — their biggest market — the glass scene is full of art glass. At trade shows in the States buyers frequently tell them that nothing like their work exists in north America.



Their success lies in their complementary approaches to glassmaking. For Ben the creative process starts with the product. "I am thinking about designs before addressing technicalities such as 'how will we make this?'" Simon's approach, however, is rooted firmly in the training he received after art school. "I worked in a factory where basic skills and an obsession with quality were driven in to me," he explains. Simon's projects invariably grow from the technical or practical. For example, his snail-stemmed candlesticks and bowls come from restoring candelabras. He opens a cupboard filled with shattered sugar bowls and glass lamps, and hauls out a salmon pink lampshade. "You see the wavy bits on this hideous thing? Well learning how to do them might trigger an idea for something we could work from."

Having joined the company only recently Ben enjoys filling gaps in the current range. "I'm interested in cheaper items — things which can be easily produced without diminishing the quality." His hugely popular "peanut" vases, are a good example. They are fun, unusual and affordable (from £44). "I get real satisfaction from seeing our designs on shelves in shops, as opposed to galleries."

They both insist that glassmaking is an awful profession. The early stages of training are unrewarding because it takes years to get to the stage where you can make something. Why did they persist? The attraction for Ben was the challenge of a new material. "As a kid I used to make things out of all sorts of bits and pieces," he says. "So at art school it was just an extension of that." Simon's route to the workshop remains unclear, but when he talks about their work, it's obvious that he is passionate about his profession. Finally he caves in. "I love it. And I make money out of it." But neither is particularly interested in glass once out of the workshop. "I don't have glass in my home. In fact I collect ceramics," says Simon. "You don't want to look at it all the time or you'll become a glass anorak."

Photo: Jane Baker

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### Can't find the glasses you want? Then blow your own

In the past 40 years, the French hill-top village of Biot — just inland from Antibes — has become the focus for a revival of the Provençal craft of hand-blown glassware. It began in July 1956, when Eloi Monod had the idea of copying in glass the traditional shapes and objects that local potters had been making since Roman times. With that in mind, he founded the Verrière de Biot with two other employees. Drawing inspiration from Venetian glassware as well as the local potters, they worked on creating the look that has become Biot's trademark, "verre bûlé", with bubbles of gas imprisoned between two layers of coloured glass. During the French school holidays, the Verrière de Biot runs one-week evening classes in the art of glass-making, open to anyone over the age of 16 who wants to return from holiday with something longer-lasting than a suntan. It's a practical course, with the emphasis on showing rather than telling participants what to do, so even rudimentary French is enough for anyone who wants to take part. Students work in small groups, two or three people to every master glass-blower,

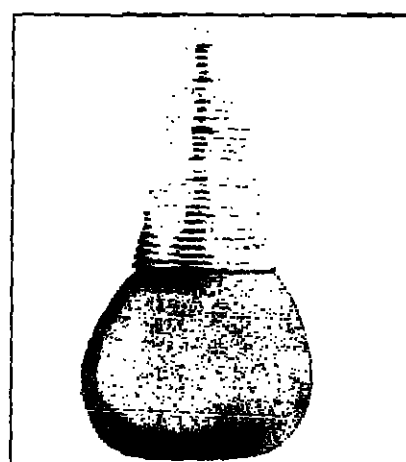
learning the fundamentals: taking the molten glass — a mixture of mainly sand, potash and soda at 1100 degrees centigrade — and carefully working the honey-like mixture at the end of a long hollow tube into the basic form, then shaping it and adding the finishing details. The trademark bubbles are produced by dipping one piece of molten glass, cooled slightly in water, into bicarbonate of soda, and then wrapping a second layer of glass round that. The heat vapourises the bicarbonate, leaving bubbles trapped between the two layers. The colour is produced by adding metal oxides to the molten glass; cobalt oxide, for instance, makes a clear blue. It is, of course, a great deal more difficult than it sounds. To become a master glass-blower involves a long training. The apprentices at Biot start around the age of 16, and follow a practical and thorough course that takes them up through seven grades. The whole process takes about 8 to 10 years. The summer students have considerably less time than this for their training. Nevertheless, at the end of the week, participants take home a diploma, a T-

shirt and, most importantly, a simple hand-blown goblet that they have made themselves (possibly with a bit of help from the teacher, but other people don't need to know that). This goblet could well help to cure one perennial summer problem: the most tasted delicious in the south of France but comes over all ordinary back home. Poured into an amethyst or rose-quartz tinted beaker that you made yourself in Biot, the wine will look so spectacularly sunny that your tastebuds will be tricked into liking it again. And it works just as well on supermarket plonk. The course costs 1,500f and runs every week during the French school holidays. For more information, write to La Verrière de Biot, Chemin des Combès, 06410 Biot, France; call 00 33 93650300 or fax on 00 33 93650056. Several people there speak English. Because the class sizes are so small, it is essential to book in advance. Catalogues and order forms are available from the same address.

Claire Gervat



### Reader offer



We have fifty bottles of Monsoon eau de toilette spray, worth £18.95 each, to give away. The perfume combines the scent of jungle lily, gardenia, ylang ylang with warmer notes of sandalwood and amber, and comes in an award winning bottle.

Write to: Monsoon/Independent, Cofy, 17 Cavendish Square, London W1M 0HE by August 14.

### Good thing

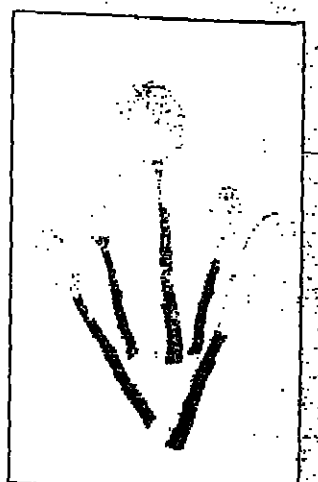
Love knot perfume bottle, £58.75

If the Design Museum's exhibition of 40 perfume flasks, *Treasures of Fabergé*, has you feeling rather covetous then it's probably time you visited The Glasshouse. Here you can toy with the idea of investing in a modern masterpiece by David Taylor (how about his Five Stopper Bottle at £4,500?), or Fleur Tookey whose Love Knot Scent Bottles are shown above. Perfect for re-packaging those cheap and cheerful scents you can buy on street corners from men with suitcases.

The Glasshouse, 0171-359 8162  
The Design Museum, 0171 378 6055

### Mad thing

Five-piece Twig Bronze Flatware, £23.50 Eat outdoors in perfect camouflaged harmony. While one end of this cutlery is as you would expect, the forged handles rapidly become horticulturally shaped. Slip the cotton napkin through their Flower Pot Napkin Rings and the ensemble is complete. English Garden Collection (catalogue line, freephone 0800 10300)





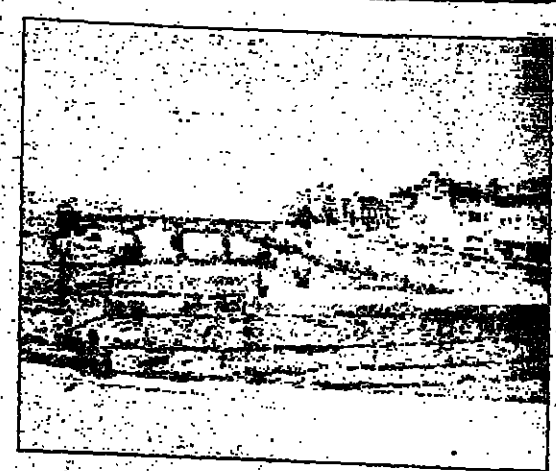






# scotland travel

the official cycle route.

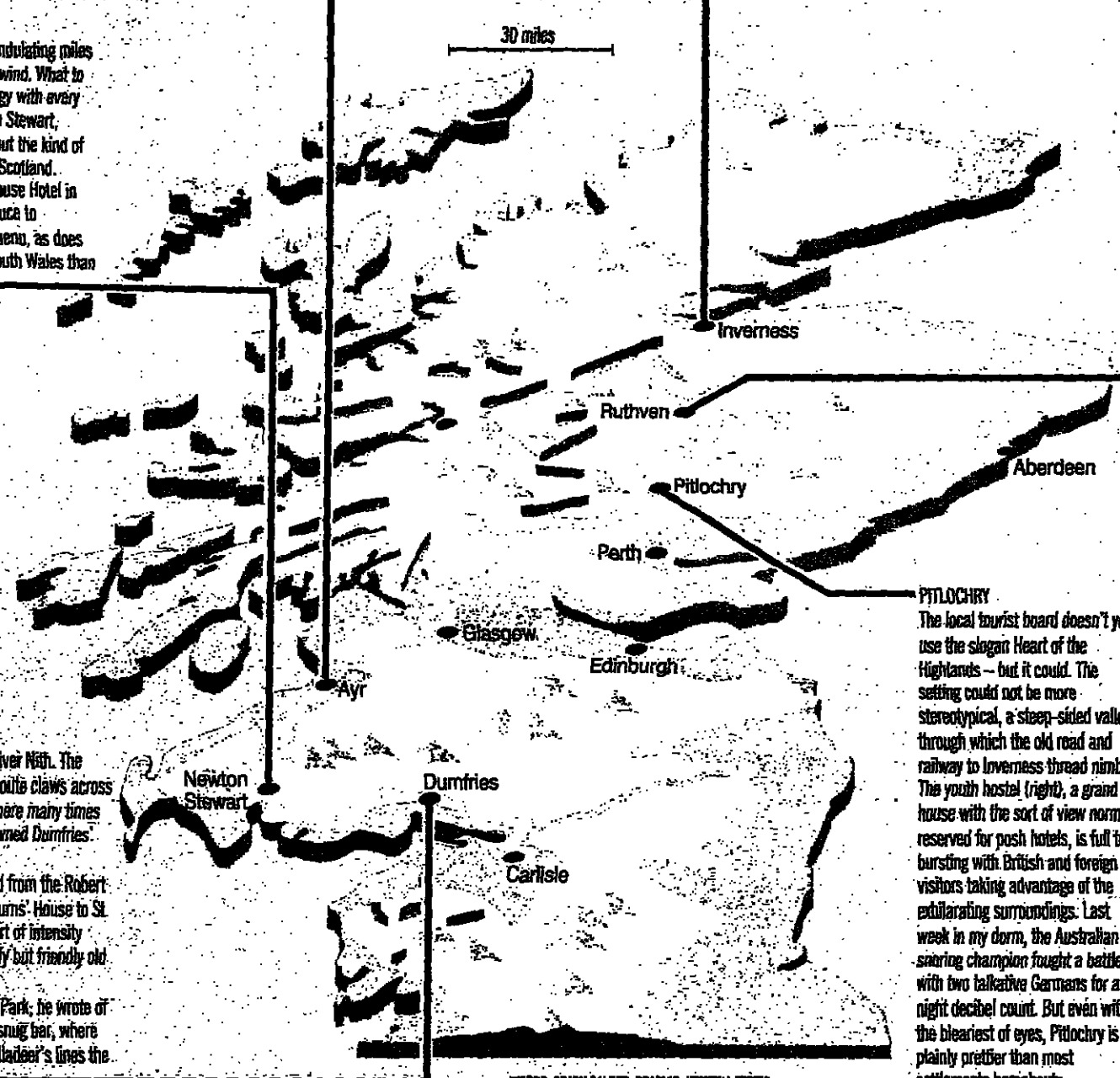


**AYR**  
The most complete destination on the whole trail, Ayr has beach, Burns and Butlin's. You could probably get into a lot of trouble in the pubs or North Berwick for asserting so, but Ayr has the finest stretch of sandy seashore in the country. It curves lazily from the NATO relic known as Prestwick airport to the Butlin's holiday village, offering safe sand and warm water (well, less cold than North Berwick, anyway). The Robert Burns connection is milked vigorously in Alloway, once a village but now a straggly suburb. The dividing line between comfortable suburbia and open country is crossed by the extraordinary Brig o'Doon: imagine a huge Gothic arch straddling a fast-flowing river, its damp cobbles only barely negotiable.

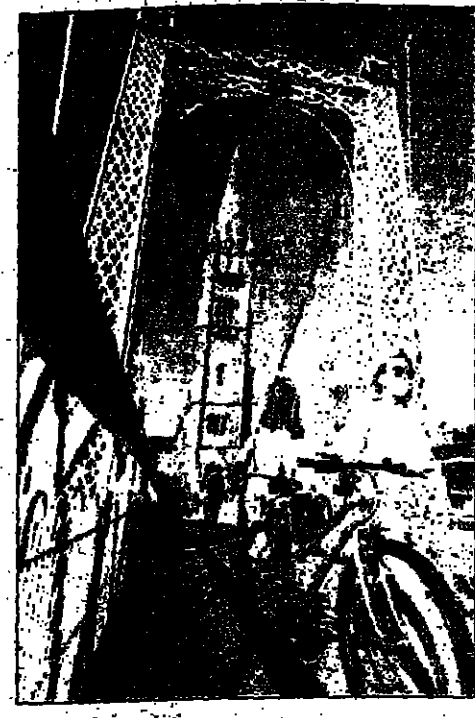
**NEWTON STEWART**  
For a good definition of the word "appetite", by this trick. Cycle for 90 undulating miles through Scotland in a due west direction, i.e. directly into the prevailing wind. What to others may be a fresh breeze is, to the cyclist, a cruel gale sapping energy with every gust. By the time the trail nears the weatherbeaten stonework of Newton Stewart, crammed into the valley of the River Cree, you are fantasising wildly about the kind of dinner you would devour were you not in a sparsely populated corner of Scotland. A Yorkshireman to the rescue: chef Chris Walker moved to Creebridge House Hotel in Newton Stewart seven years ago, and set about exploring the local produce to considerable culinary effect. Locally caught salmon leaps from the bar menu, as does haggis worthy of a Burnsian address. The wine list owes more to New South Wales than South West Scotland, which is probably a good thing.



**DUMFRIES**  
Dumfries is a properly stout old market settlement, perched astride the River Nith. The main road from Carlisle to Glasgow used to come this way, and the bike route claws across the fine 500-year-old Galloway Bridge (above). Robert Burns crossed here many times on his perambulations around southwest Scotland, and the poet has spawned Dumfries' most thriving industry. The Burns business is a bit of literary production line: tourists are shipped from the Robert Burns Centre on the right bank to the Burns Statue on the left, from the Burns' House to St Michael's Church where the poet was buried 200 summers ago. If that sort of intensity drives you straight to the nearest pub, then make it the Globe Inn, a scruffy but friendly old dive that lurches along a Dumfries alleyway in an alluring fashion. Burns drank here. He also philandered, with a barmaid named Helen Ann Park; he wrote of her as Anna of the Gowden Locks. His chair still has pride of place in the snug bar, where tourists are welcome to sit and sip. But if you can't resist a few of the balladeer's lines the rule is that you must buy the regatta a drink.



**INVERNESS**  
I have yet to be convinced that there is any elegant way to approach Inverness. The east of the town has been ripped apart by the expressway to Wick (an unlikely but true highway), while the west is an unduly compromise of homes and garages. Even the railway manages to find an unpromising route into the town. Shrug off the 20th-century trappings, settle by the pedestrian suspension bridge beside the River Ness (right) and you could be somewhere as serene as Oxford or Cambridge. Two advantages: no tourists, and evenings which stretch brightly implausibly towards midnight. Sunset over the Black Isle may not be as cosmic as the northern lights, but in July it is warm and wonderful.



**RUTHVEN**  
Much of the trail north follows General Wade's military road, the vital infrastructure for subjugating the Scots. The English troops had to be billeted somewhere, and on a lonely hummock near Kingussie the remains of Ruthven Barracks look as hauntingly oppressive as they did three centuries ago. From a distance, you could mistake the tall structure for an abbey; up close, the more prosaic purpose is evident. The roofless ruins by the Spye fringe the finest stretch of scenery in Scotland: you will be glad to see the back of them.

**PITLOCHRY**  
The local tourist board doesn't yet use the slogan Heart of the Highlands - but it could. The setting could not be more stereotypical, a steep-sided valley through which the old road and railway to Inverness thread nimbly. The youth hostel (right), a grand old house with the sort of view normally reserved for posh hotels, is full to bursting with British and foreign visitors taking advantage of the exhilarating surroundings. Last week in my dorm, the Australian snoring champion fought a battle with two talkative Germans for all-night decibel count. But even with the blarney of eyes, Pitlochry is plainly prettier than most settlements hereabouts.



WORDS: SIMON CALDER, GRAPHIC: KRISTINA FERRELL

## Glasgow this summer: a cultural Butlin's, with dignity

Simon Calder follows in royal footsteps to the rejuvenated heart of Scotland's largest city

Sunlight splashes through the elaborate iron roof, filtering down to platform one just in time to meet the train from the south. An old Deacon Blue hit spouts from the PA and reverberates around the terminus. *Dignity*, Glasgow Central station administers a performance-enhancing shot of energy for the arriving traveller, creating the right mood for a city which seems always to be in the middle of a festival.

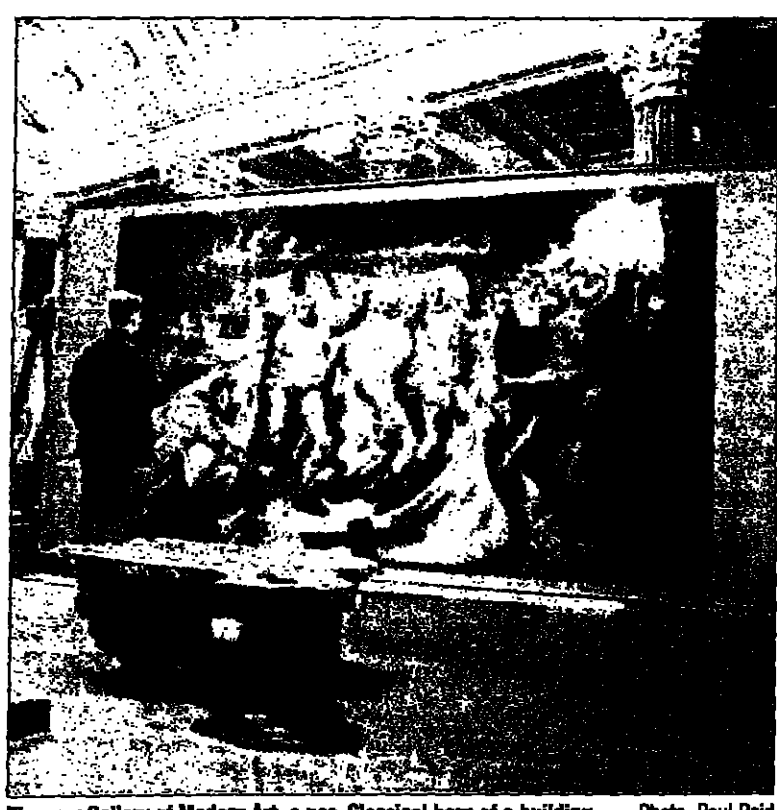
This weekend the excuse is Fairs Fortnight, when the city traditionally shuts down for two weeks. You will struggle to find any evidence of inactivity, though; on the contrary, the pulse in the city centre is racing.

Next month, the Glasgow International Festival of Design brings Terence Conran and Paul Smith to the UK's last refuge of design excellence. Scotland's largest community is a designer city, a cultural Butlin's. To convince yourself, try this: catch a train to Glasgow Central, pause long enough to admire the dignified Victorian terminus, then take a sharp right out of the station.

Ford a river of traffic, make landfall on the pedestrian precinct and duck under an archway. You should find yourself in Royal Exchange Square. The Queen was here earlier this month, opening the new Gallery of Modern Art. In the opinion of many critics, the gallery is an artistic abomination. But treat it as a tourist attraction, and it has immediate appeal.

The shell is a suffocatingly elaborate neo-Classical barn of a building, with two dozen Corinthian columns crammed capital-to-capital into a space only slightly bigger than a tennis court. A miscellany of modern art is slotted into the available spaces, providing a multi-dimensional snapshot of contemporary art in a venerable setting.

Some people walk in off Queen Street but walk out shortly afterwards - not in disgust, but because they have missed several floors of exhibits in a gallery endowed with Tardis-like qualities. A dazzle of neon draws the visitor down to the basement, while the upper floors are a jolly jumble of Australian Aboriginal art, tricky photography and a café.



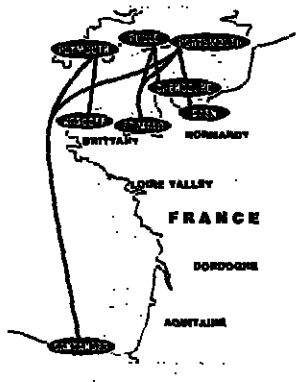
The new Gallery of Modern Art: a neo-Classical barn of a building. Photo: Paul Reid

great Clyde creation, RMS *Queen Mary*. Or head for Sauchiehall Street, a short stroll across the concise city centre, and indulge yourself in the Willow Rooms - specifically, the Room de Luxe, where Charles Rennie Mackintosh collides gloriously with catering. Ladies who lunch can sometimes make it hard for tourists to get a look in to the tea room, where bearded waitresses glide between the grand lines of the first great designer of the 20th century. Be patient, then indulge in lashings of tea, cakes and gossip.

Elbowing his way to the front of the festival frenzy, CRM (as the lurching classes call him) is celebrated this summer by an exhaustive exhibition of his work, along the street at the McLennan Galleries. Be quick: it closes at the end of September, at which point the whole caboodle follows the *Queen Mary* to Los Angeles, by way of New York and Chicago.

If, however, the daring but austere lines of Mackintosh do not appeal, you may wish to contemplate other examples of the tradition that will make Glasgow the UK City of Architecture and Design in 1999. Outside, workmanlike streets faced with ruddy bricks gently subside into demure housing. Much of the inner-city ring around the centre has been demolished into a kind of urban no-man's land; one patch that has survived is the People's Palace - the city has maintained its socialist credentials much more effectively than the Labour Party, and this shrine of social history shows how. Further out, suburbia is interrupted by grand designs like the Burrell Collection: ancient art meets angular architecture in what seems to be the middle of a field, and turns out to be Pollok Park - the grounds of a monumental mansion.

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# What gives Barcelona such a buzz?

The people make Catalonia's capital fizz. And the sense of style. By Frank Bough



Photographs: Left Magnum/Right David Asdown

Above: Gaudi's sculpture at the Guell Park. Barcelona is sprinkled with works by Catalonia's most celebrated eccentric. Right: Catalan flags fly high in the city

The tables spilled out of the bar into the tiny square one side of which was entirely bordered by the front of the church. The fountain held centre stage. The little boy was about a year old. He'd just found out that if he pressed downwards on his feet he could stand like a grown up. He was celebrating this discovery by creating mayhem, pushing over the wine cooler and dragging the cutlery off the table. He tottered this way and that. His mother's eyes never left him.

A christening party came down the church steps, and made for the bar. The mother, chic in her best Sunday suit, baby in arms fast asleep - legs dangling puppet fashion.

A cyclist entered the square, filled a water bottle at the fountain and rode off again.

Prosaic maybe, but life in the Plaça Barceloneta is more absorbing than television. And the fish lunch, brought out from the bar, was sublime.

We were on a city break - arrive from Heathrow lunchtime Friday return lunchtime Monday. We'd not been to Barcelona before. Everybody said we'd love Barcelona, and we did. The place fizzes. It sparkles. Not many cities do. London and Paris, New York, all splendid cities in their way are short of the essential bubbles.

## Getting there

Air fares to Barcelona are lowest from airports in the London area. Debonair (0500 146200) offers a fare of £29 return including tax from Luton, but note that seats at these prices are limited. The lowest fare on EasyJet (0990 292929) is £103. In comparison, the lowest fare for the summer from British Airways (0345 222111) and Iberia (0171-830 0011) is £230.

## Getting around

From the airport, regular trains run to the city centre. Here you can link into the underground railway, but note that it is a single line (in a V-shape) and not a lot of use. Buses are fast, frequent and confusing to the uninitiated.

It's not easy to pin down quite what gives Barcelona such a buzz. It certainly has style. No grunge is evident in its fine streets and boulevards. No hanging shirt tails or Doc Martens on the women, and remarkably few jeans. No baggy trousers and reversed baseball caps on the boys.

Barcelona had a good Olympic Games in 1992: the success belonged to the city rather than to Spain. It's the up-front capital of Catalonia, a region very sure of its identity. And life is good. Apart, that is, from the usual modern afflictions not peculiar to Barcelona: pickpocketing and thieving.

It's a place where you do all the touristy things. Start with Las Ramblas, the city's proud promenade. You'll have little choice, as these five interconnecting streets are at the centre of everything and they pull you in. There are kiosks selling everything from postcards and newspapers to flowers and exotic birds and animals. In fact, though, we felt uncomfortable here: too many large birds in small cages. There are dancers, and tumblers and performance artists who can freeze themselves into immobility for minutes on end.

We wandered round the market there, bulging with all the fruits of early summer: shiny

reds, bright greens, the white of asparagus, mounds of fresh strawberries and the ice-cooled fish. In the middle was a tapas bar, set out with dishes of chicken, pieces of fish, savoury meat balls, bright red marinated peppers in olive oil. Behind the bar, a couple worked in cramped conditions to which some EU Health Inspector had probably turned a blind eye. We ate deliciously for very few pounds.

After Las Ramblas, seek out Antonio Gaudi and his acolytes, with their glorious Art Nouveau architecture that is sprinkled throughout Barcelona. Wonderful, fanciful confections

with sweeping, flowery, wrought-iron balconies and pepper-pot roofs of multicoloured ceramic tiles. Gaudi's Sagrada Familia cathedral is his best known signature and proof that there's never any substitute for simply standing in front of a building and looking at it. And there are Gaudi-designed houses, a park and an extraordinary hospital at the top of the Avenue that bears Gaudi's name. He and Pablo Picasso are the stars of Barcelona. The representative collection of Picasso's work in the old town is a delight.

We walked, mostly. At every church there seemed to be a wedding, in every little square a place of refreshment, on every corner somebody playing lovely guitar. Coincidentally, we hit the feast of Corpus Christi. A warm Sunday evening, thousands in the square in front of the city's great Gothic cathedral. Open air mass, said by the Bishop. And the host, the body of Christ carried through the streets of the old town, the crowds on either side genuflecting as the canopied procession passed by. At one point two columns of gymnasts - six young men, each atop the other - raised their arms in an Olympian gesture of respect. The crowd applauded.

## Accommodation

The Independent's favourite option for any budget is the Hostal Galeries Malda, in a shopping arcade at Carrer del Pi in the heart of the city (00 34 317 3002). Rooms at this friendly pension cost £10 single/£15 double. A good place to look for more extravagant options is along Passeig de Gracia. Beware of staying in one of the many hotels along Las Ramblas because of the high incidence of robbery; street crime is rife.

## Who to ask

The Spanish Tourist Office is at 57 St James's Street, London SW1 (0171-499 0901).

## The machinery for dealing with distressed travellers is firmly in place

SIMON CALDER



Usually, travel companies are more considerate. They tend to go bust in September, when all the bills come in from airlines and hoteliers and the management discovers a cash-flow crisis of terminal proportions. But as thousands of people booked with The Flight Company discovered yesterday, it is possible for operators to cease trading on the eve of the summer school holidays.

My experience as a customer of this seat-only operator was a miserable trip to Alicante. The first half was spent in the departure lounge in Gatwick, the second in a succession of Spanish phone boxes as I tried to find out which (if any) plane I was booked on for the return journey. After having to fork out an extra £75, I was not over-impressed by the competence of the management.

Fortunately, British travel firms

have demonstrated an aptitude for going out of business on so many occasions that the machinery for dealing with distressed travellers is now firmly in place. It swung into action yesterday, finding flights home for stranded holidaymakers and providing financial protection for those

intending to travel. Ironically, while one department of the Civil Aviation Authority was calling in the company's bond and reassuring customers, another part announced that Britain's 30 largest tour operators lost a collective £10 million in 1995.

If you, like me, took a package holiday last year, you can regard this as a one-pound subsidy from the funds of generous tour operators. A jolly good thing - until you consider two possible victims. First, the small independent operator forced to compete in an industry where making a living seems of only secondary importance to market share. Second, we the holidaymakers, who ultimately pay for the well-honed financial rescue operations - or find ourselves sleepless in Spain, clutching a ticket issued by the now singularly ill-named Flight Company.

Last week in this column I raised the alarm about drinks prices in Spain, where First Choice found tourists spent £7.40 each day on alcohol. The tour operator says the nightly drinks bill covers two bottles of beer and two glasses of wine, plus a local spirit and mixer.

So as the summer holidays begin in earnest, a competition: which of the world's many hostilities offers the cheapest plank? A box of rough Spanish plunk to the most budget-minded traveller. A consolation prize for the most expensive round: a miniature of 140-degree proof Mexican mescl, complete with inebriate worm. Someone brought it back from Acapulco two years ago, and it seems to define the term "unwanted gift". Spend a fortune and it could be yours.

Write, with proof if possible, to Drink Problem, Travel The Independent, One Canada Square, London E14 5DL.

## something to declare

### Ageing aircraft

Transatlantic airlines which include early Boeing 747s in their fleets. By Andrew Osborn

Well-maintained older aircraft are as safe as any other, but following the loss of the TWA Boeing 747-100 from New York to Paris this week, a number of readers have asked for details of airlines that operate this type.

**Air Canada:** three 747-100s in the fleet (from 1971, 1973 and 1974 respectively), sometimes used on transatlantic routes.

**British Airways:** has 15 of the first series of 747s, used on shorter long-haul routes such as Heathrow to the eastern US.

**Delta Airlines:** does not use 747s itself, but sells space on Virgin Atlantic flights to Florida and Boston - which sometimes use 747-100 equipment.

**Kuwait Airways:** this aircraft type is mainly used on routes within the Middle East, but occasionally from London to New York to cope with summer demand.

**Northwest Airlines:** the three 747-100s are used exclusively between Tokyo and Honolulu route. UK routes use DC-10s.

**TWA:** the 747-100 is the backbone of the fleet. It is used regularly on the Gatwick to St Louis route together with the -200.

**United:** will use 747-100s on transatlantic runs on a few occasions during summer, but only to Frankfurt - not the UK.

**Virgin Atlantic:** one 747-100, used from Gatwick to Boston, Miami and Orlando.

### True or false

US airlines are more dangerous than those of other countries.

**False.** Despite the crash of the TWA Jumbo flying from New York to Paris on Thursday, and the loss of a ValuJet DC-9 in the Florida Everglades in May, American airlines remain much safer than the world's average.

According to the useful reference book *The World's Most Dangerous Places* (Fielding, £11.95), one person dies on an American carrier for each 100 billion passenger miles flown. This makes the US the safest large country in the world - for air passengers at least; travelling in America by car is 90 times more dangerous. Risks increase rapidly in other parts of the world, notably former republics of the Soviet Union, Colombia and Nigeria. If you want a carrier which has never lost a passenger, then there are plenty to choose from. Examples include Virgin Atlantic, Qantas of Australia and Laca of Costa Rica.

### Free travel for a student

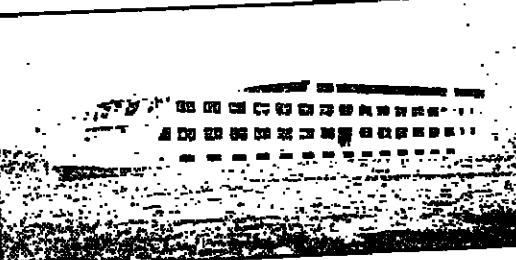
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### Bargain of the week

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# King's Lynn: happily behind the times

By Edmund Bealby-Wright

The last time King's Lynn was the avant-garde was 300 years ago. If you came in 1696 to do some business you might have headed for that ultra-modern building on the quayside, the Custom House. Afterwards you might have stayed in The Duke's Head, an even more racy design, with a full-frontal display of erotic pediments, the feminine curved one being brutally ruptured by the pointed one bursting up through it. This explicit and unrestrained baroque was about 30 years ahead of its time.

Today the bright-pink facade beams at the Tuesday Market Place defying anyone not to smile back. During the King's Lynn festival this cheerful face – with a walrus moustache of white stucco sprouting over each first floor window – will be the backdrop for a series of free concerts by such jolly relics of pop history as Boney M and Sweet. So Lynn is back where it is happiest: about 20 years behind the times.

Recent attempts to bring King's Lynn up to date have been disastrous, such as the death by pedestrianisation suffered by the High Street. In accordance with the latest thinking, there has been ample provision of benches, litter bins and hanging baskets. As a result the High Street is not a street anymore: it has been turned into a rainswept shopping precinct, with charity shops taking over the increasing number of bankrupt lots.

For shopaholics, King's Lynn may be a good place to try out, but happily you don't have to endure the High Street to get from one festival venue to another. A route down King Street and Queen Street is full of interest in itself, and there is the added delight that at every corner you can dash down an alleyway to the quayside where that evocatively named river, the Great Ouse, seeps silently out into the Wash. Coming upon it at the bottom of a narrow street is like opening a window in a stuffy room.

Across the wide expanse of muddy water is a thin, green line apparently drawn with a ruler and a fine pen. That's Norfolk. The landscape may be vertically challenged but it makes up for it with extra sky; an enormous canvas, sometimes blank and sometimes with mountainous clouds looking as if they were painted by Rubens over in Antwerp and blown across the North Sea.

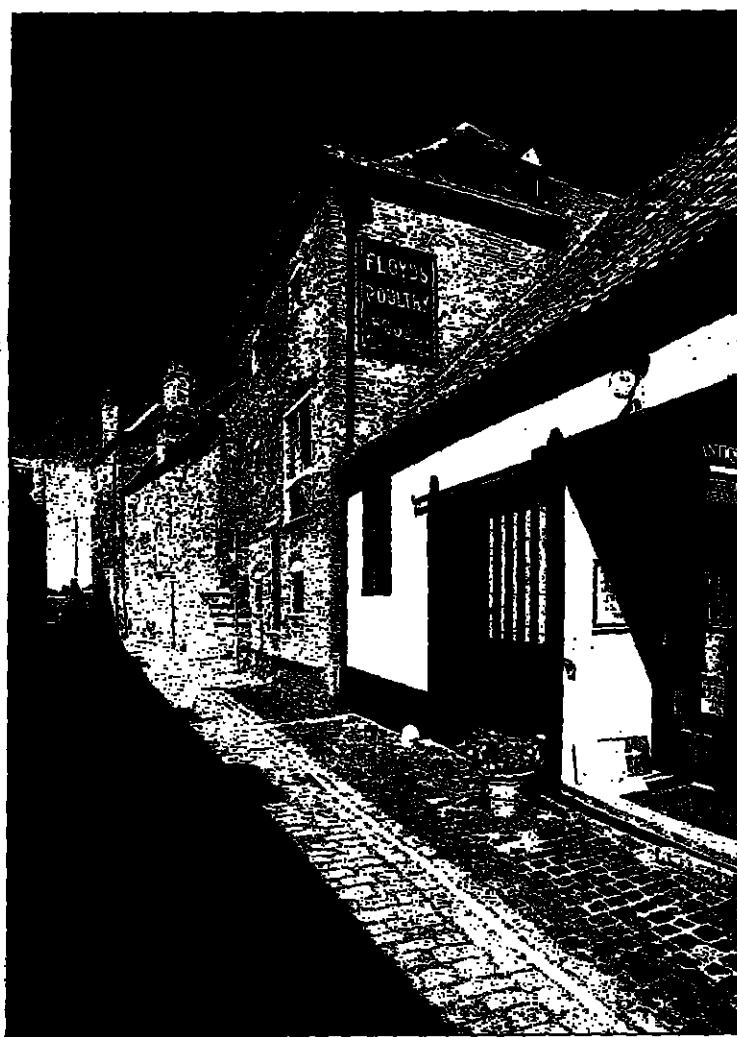
From the river you also get a view of the backs of the elegant Georgian houses, only to discover that some of them are also warehouses, and one of them (Clifton House) rises to a spectacular medieval look-out tower. You can see why Lynn was chosen as a set for BBC's *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and this part of town is in danger of becoming one giant preservation trust. Many aspects of Lynn's former life have been consigned to museums. There is one dedicated to the vanished art of fishing, and even corporal punishment is fondly commemorated in the Old Gaol House, which is now a family-run dungeon.

This last stands beside a collection of buildings that show how the past can inspire future generations to more than mere conservation. When the Guild of the Holy Trinity built themselves a grand meeting hall they hit upon the superb decorative device of using pale stone and dark flint in alternate squares. Not only was this cheaper than using just stone, it also gave a rich and showy effect, like a quilt with a huge window in it.

Such ostentation was bound to appeal to the Elizabethans, who extended the building with an arrangement of heraldry and silly windows topped with an even sillier gable to the left of the original hall. In the 1890s the matching Town Hall was built alongside with an appropriate disregard for the rules of good taste. Any town that has put up buildings that look like Battenburg cakes not once but three times in its history must be worth a visit.

Despite its stock of fine buildings, however, King's Lynn is not entirely given over to nostalgia and vanity. This is thanks mainly to the continued existence of the docks, which provide an alternative source of identity. Until recently the streets of Lynn were enlivened by the spectacle of noisy brawling between boozed-up dockers. A closed circuit TV system recently installed by the council has killed off this tradition, but perhaps the dockers will put on a special display during the festival. I have no doubt that funding from the lottery will soon be made available to set up a museum of dockers' lives.

The King's Lynn festival runs from 20 July-3 August 1996. Festival Box Office, 27-29 King Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 1HA (01553 773578). Information about King's Lynn and West Norfolk (including accommodation) from the tourist information centre, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 5DQ (01553 763044).



Any town that has put up buildings that look like Battenburg cakes not once but three times in its history must be worth a visit... Top: the quay and restored customs house; left: the old quarter; above: the chequered meeting hall of the Guild of the Holy Trinity  
Photographs: Brian Harris



THAT  
SUMMER

## Getting stoned was a bad experience

In 1973, Angus Frazer and the Shah were alive and unpopular and in Iran

I had never been stoned before, at least not in the biblical sense. I wasn't sure how to handle it. I plodded on until one of my assailants scored a direct hit on my left temple, whereupon my self-control and I parted company. I bent down, grabbed a handy piece of Marand mountain roadside and hurled it at my persecutors. It was sheer luck that one of them intercepted my lack of aim: there was a loud cry and to my amazement they disappeared.

The backpacking fraternity hadn't introduced themselves to the Persians in 1972. They just spluttered through on aged buses to Afghanistan where the hash was cheap. If I had any doubts that I was a pioneer, those Kurdish youths dispelled them.

Next day I arrived in Tehran, and returned to the 12th century. I approached an imposing bank in the city centre, to change some money. The commissionaire looked doubtfully at my threadbare shorts, but let me pass. As the doors whispered shut behind me, the horn-blasting, heat-blistered inferno of Tehran was replaced by a delicious, cool silence. The marble hall swept before me to the foot of a grand staircase, totally empty. I knew how Alice in Wonderland would have felt at the bottom of the rabbit hole.

I paused, then tried the first door on the right. A boardroom table was surrounded by a group that looked as if they could be the governors of the Iranian Central Bank. I hurriedly tried to withdraw, but before I could free my rucksack from the door jamb, one of the Savile Row suits arose and inquired in impeccable English if he could help me. The Persian banking system halted while I was ushered politely through the corridors of power to the public halls where I could change my £10 into rials.

A week later hospitality joined courtesy on the roll of Persian virtues. I was in a remote village on the shores of the Caspian Sea, sipping a rose petal sherbet and studying my map, when a minor problem presented itself. The road back to civilisation carried about six motorised vehicles a day. Off the beaten track in Persia nobody really understood what a hitch-hiker was, and I could envisage spending weeks travelling to Isfahan, my next destination.

Luckily, though, all Persians travelled by bus, and the smallest outposts boasted remarkably good services. So I headed for the bus station. The man in the ticket office and I got on famously. Despite my elementary grasp of Persian he perceived that I wished to catch a bus

and mimed in return that it departed at six and a half.

I reported at six, just as my friend was shutting up for the night. A flaw in our communication became apparent. The bus left at 6.30 the next morning. This was serious news. I was a good sleeper, and my chances of waking up at 5.30am on a Caspian beach without an alarm clock were zero.

Umar smiled. There was no problem. I was to have dinner and sleep at his house. Then he could ensure that I caught the bus.

The house was a large building, ranged around a central courtyard. Each wall had a veranda: the effect was like a miniature cloister. We sat on the floor around a beautiful Persian carpet on which were placed dishes of lamb, rice yoghurt and sauces. I was squatting on my haunches, when an animated discussion developed, apparently about my clothes. Umar beckoned me through to his bedroom, produced a splendid pair of the baggy trousers, and motioned me to put them on. I was bemused by this ritual, but returned to the dining room dressed in Umar's best.

As I again squatted down to eat, the room dissolved in laughter. The family realised that I actually pre-

ferred squatting to sitting, and had not been protecting my filthy jeans from their spotless floor.

Iran was a jigsaw of fascination, and I was sad when it was time to begin my long hitch-hike home. Just outside Tehran I was picked up by a juggernaut. It was raining by the time we reached Tabriz and up in the mountains the temperature had plummeted. Beyond the town the road continued to climb, winding up each successive ridge and snaking down each valley. On a clear day we might have seen Ararat to the north. Now, however, night had fallen, and the headlights fought to slice through the wall of the rain.

The driver was singing in a nasal falsetto interrupted by frequent yawns. He gesticulated emphatically – would I take over the driving? But I had no desire to start learning how to control a heavy goods vehicle with two fully laden trailer units, on pot-holed hairpins, in a thunderstorm at night – and in a foreign country. Instead, I just shouted at him every few seconds to keep him awake.

The following year a guide to Iran was published, including tips on backpacking. I suppose it would have been useful; but then usefulness must be weighed against the delights of the unexpected.

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### How timeshare worked out for two buyers

## Scott Hughes

**IN TOMORROW'S SUNDAY MIRROR...  
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## money

The urge to massage reported earnings remains strong, particularly among companies that have built their reputation by growth through acquisitions

What morals can one draw from the saga of Terry Smith? For those who are not familiar with the story, he is the one-time banking analyst at UBS, the Swiss-owned City broking house, who dared to publish research questioning the accounting practices of some of Britain's biggest quoted companies. Those highlighted included his own employer's clients, such as Grand Metropolitan, who took great and public umbrage.

When it became clear that he was pressing ahead with his plan to publish the research as a book, UBS promptly fired him. Mr Smith himself, an unrepentantly chippy character who likes a scrap, was sued for breach of contract. Nobody claimed his research was flawed or inaccurate, or denied that he was providing a valuable service to professional investors in showing how widespread the use of "creative accounting" had become. But he had committed the grave crime of saying publicly what blue-chip broking firms prefer only to have said in private, if at all. Faced with legal bills running to more than £170,000, Mr Smith's destiny seemed unpromising – no job and no prospects.

Yet the story has had a happier ending. The legal case was eventually settled. Mr Smith found another job in a smaller boutique stock-broking firm without heavyweight corporate clients to complain about what he was saying in his research, and his reputation among investors and the media has soared.

His book, *Accounting For Growth*, sold a remarkable 55,000 copies – not bad for a work devoted to such arcane matters as the use of reorganisation provisions in the way companies account for acquisitions. This week he published a second edition, demonstrating that, while many of the loopholes he exposed in the first edition have now been eliminated, the urge to massage reported earnings remains strong, particularly among companies that have built their reputation by growth through acquisitions.

So what can investors learn from this episode? Well, I don't think anybody really ever thought that stock-broking houses were first and foremost centres of the relentless pursuit of truth. Their game is making money, which means taking fees from corporate clients and advising them on bids and deals, as well as producing buy and sell ideas for



JONATHAN DAVIS  
INVESTMENTS

their investor clients. Research is one of the services they provide to their clients, but it is far from being their *raison d'être*.

But, as the fund management business continues to grow in size and clout, the appetite for quality research is undoubtedly rising, forcing the biggest brokers to beef up their research departments. It is no coincidence that, while Mr Smith's original research put the barons at UBS in an awkward position, fund managers loved it. It demonstrated in gory detail, and with concrete examples, how easily some of the

largest companies were able to use the UK's lax accounting rules to massage their reported earnings figures.

Of course, in an ideal world, professional investors should be able to work this out for themselves. But a surprisingly large number of fund managers are either too busy or too preoccupied with broad investment allocation decisions to spend their time poring through the notes at the back of the accounts of the companies in which they invest. An embarrassingly large number of blue-chip investment firms found themselves still holding shares when companies such as Polly Peck, Coloroll and British & Commonwealth went under.

These companies went bust despite producing audited accounts which appeared to show them making large profits only weeks before the debacle. Unsurprisingly, several of the firms highlighted in Smith's first book, including Tiphook, Queen's Moat, Ladbroke and Grand Met itself, have subsequently underperformed badly. Tiphook, another UBS client, even went into receivership. There is no doubt that the quality of reported accounting information is now improving.

The Accounting Standards Board under Sir Colin Tweedie has made a spirited attempt in the last few years to eliminate the most obvious areas of abuse, such as off-balance-sheet finance and merger accounting. The introduction of standardised cash-flow statements has been a big help in allowing users of accounts to detect whether profits are being seriously massaged or not.

But the battle is far from over. The UK remains the only major economy which still allows companies to write off "goodwill" directly against reserves rather than depreciating it through the profit and loss account. The result is that UK companies regularly report higher profits and return on equity than they would do under stricter US accounting rules.

So the investor's challenge is not to be duped. What does that mean in practice? Well, rule one is: be cautious about earnings. Always be prepared to put reported profits under the microscope. They may well not be all that they are cracked up to be. There is an overwhelming volume of evidence that reported profits are only a limited guide to a company's underlying economic performance. Discounted cash-flow measures are

much more highly correlated with subsequent share price performance than earnings figures.

Secondly, therefore, always keep track of the cash flow. One of Terry Smith's many helpful tips is this: if a company's cash flow from operations is widely different from the reported operating profit, be suspicious. It is likely that there is some degree of creative accounting at work. Another of his pieces of advice is: avoid companies whose businesses you don't really understand.

But his best point, for cautious long-term investors at least, is also the simplest. Stick to quality and you will not go badly wrong. Which consumer companies do not feel the need to value their brands in their balance sheet? Step forward Unilever and Marks & Spencer. Which companies do not feel obliged to improve their reported profits by including a deferred tax charge? Come forward Reuters, GUS and Marks & Spencer (again). The best companies do not resort to creative accounting – they don't need to.

*Accounting For Growth* by Terry Smith. Published by Century Business, £14.99.

## Eastern promise: high returns for high risk in a fast growing world

In the second of our emerging markets series, Alison Eadie considers South-east Asia



Paper profits: Traders in celebratory mood at the Seoul Stock Exchange in South Korea

Photograph: AP

Investing in emerging markets is relatively expensive compared with the UK because most emerging market trusts charge a 5 per cent fee up front and up to 1.5 per cent a year in management charges, but the rewards can be proportionately higher. Despite their sharp correction in 1994 and consolidation in 1995, total returns from South-east Asian stock markets were 143 per cent over the past five years compared with 86 per cent in the UK.

Economic growth is consistently faster than in the developed economies, investment opportunities are multiplying and valuations are at historically low levels. The combined market capitalisation of the eight main stock markets (including the "emerged" Hong Kong and Singapore markets) is equal to more than 60 per cent of the London market. Fund manager Fidelity says the number of quoted companies has increased to 13,000 last year from 5,000 in 1983 as new issues keep on coming.

Investment success, as always, depends on picking the right manager. Old Mutual Thailand, a single country unit trust, has doubled investors' money over three years and tripled it over five, according to Micropal, the funds analyst. Schroder Pacific Growth, a mainstream regional unit trust, produced 69 per cent gains over three years and 188 per cent over five.

Conversely, Micropal shows Credit Suisse Orient up just 24 per cent over three years and Lloyds Pacific Basin ahead 68 per cent in five years, both beaten by the average of UK-based growth trusts, which grew by 40 per cent and 77 per cent over three and five years respectively.

The arguments for continuing to invest in South-east Asia hinge on superior economic growth and expanding consumer markets. The Asian Development Bank forecasts growth of 7.4 per cent this year and 7.1 per cent next, more than double that expected from the developed world. The growing purchasing power of domestic consumers is key – including China, the region has a population of more than 1.6 billion, almost 40 per cent of whom

are under 20 years old. Asians save nearly 30 per cent of GDP, whereas the British tuck away 10 per cent.

Investors wanting to tap the Eastern promise have a wide variety of funds to choose from. At the high-risk end are country funds specialising in the less developed economies, principally China. Margaret Gadow, manager of Save & Prosper's China Dragon unit trust, says China is still a market only for the brave, even though it is looking more positive now than when the economy was overheating three years ago.

At the low-risk end are regional funds which include a large slice of Hong Kong and Singapore as well as still emerging Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia and the Philippines. The growing sophistication of stock markets in South-east Asia means massive disparities in value are a thing of the past, according to Peter Hames of Abrust's Singapore office. "You could once buy Taiwan on a multiple of 100 times earnings, when Thai banks were only on four times earnings. Thai banks were seen as boring, yet they have done incredibly well," he says. Such bargains are now far rarer. The days of consistent 20 per cent increases in profits by Asian companies are coming to an end. "We have to look for good management and good products."

KC Lee, manager of Fidelity's Asian Values and South East Asia trusts, says the chances of getting into the wrong stocks increase as the list of quoted companies swells. With corporate cultures favouring equity over debt financing (except in Korea), a continued strong flow of listings and fund raisings is to be expected.

Mr Lee pays little attention to benchmarks or country allocations but relies on a labour-intensive stock-picking approach. Last year, his 22-strong research team held more than 1,500 company meetings. He favours companies with established track records of moderately rising and sustainable earnings. He avoids high-growth, high-multiple stocks and those

in cyclical industries. He is having little to do with China directly, but prefers to invest there via well managed Hong Kong companies.

Abrust is also wary of China. Despite tremendous growth opportunities, Mr Hames says it is difficult to find companies of the right quality among the sprawling former state enterprises. However, China watchers point to an improving economic outlook as the austerity measures of July 1993 take effect. Inflation has more than halved to around 8 per cent and company valuations are looking reasonable again. Chinese blue chips listed in Hong Kong ("H" shares) are on multiples of 10.5 times earnings. Shanghai stocks are at 7.5 and the thinly traded Shenzhen stocks at 5.5. With a relaxation of monetary policy expected later this year, corporate earnings should recover.

Most China investors have been hard hit over the past two years and careful stock-picking is the key to future success rather than buying the "China story", says Stephanie Wu of Foreign & Colonial.

Ms Gadow of Save & Prosper accepts that such a young market has its problems – too few accountants and insufficient enforcement of stock market regulations – but information flows are improving and time is on its side.

Volatility – always a hazard in emerging markets – can be reduced through regular savings. Many unit and investment trusts accept contributions from as little as £20 a month. Regular saving smooths the peaks and troughs of investing as more units or shares are bought when prices are low and fewer when prices are high.

Currency is less of a hazard. The Hong Kong dollar is pegged to the US currency and most other South-east Asian currencies stay in line to some degree. Currency appreciation in the long term is a potential reward of superior economic growth. The Singapore dollar has been likened to the Swiss franc.

As markets like Singapore and Hong Kong mature and relocate their factories across borders to lower-cost neighbours, so new ones emerge. Although the vast potential of China is expected to dominate the region for the foreseeable future, other former closed or communist countries are edging into the capitalist fold. Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma, Laos and Nepal may all one day have stock markets.

For the moment, though, the old markets are the best. Hong Kong is top of the value list for Mark Mobius, manager of Templeton Emerging Markets Investment Trust. He believes fears for the market under Chinese rule from next year are overdone. And he is buying.



### LOOSE CHANGE

Bank accounts paying interest linked to rates in the London money market are currently paying better interest than conventional building society accounts, according to Cater Allen Bank. It is currently paying 5.18 per cent gross on a three-month deposit of £10,000, compared with an average 4.09 per cent on 90-day building society accounts.

General Accident Insurance is offering travel insurance for single trips at a flat rate of £1 a day for adults and 50p for children for travel in Europe. The minimum charge is £10, but a family of four can cover up to £3,500 in cancellation fees, £1,500 for lost baggage, £100 for a lost passport, and up to £2m in medical expenses and £1m worth of personal liability cover for a two-week European holiday for £43. Rates for travel outside Europe start at £2.56 a day.

Towry Law is launching a whole-year travel insurance plan covering unlimited business trips and holidays world-wide including skiing for £105, plus optional cover for a second person at £35.

Visa UK is offering readers a free

copy of its "1996 Holiday Money Guide", which lists the top 10 holiday destinations, bank opening hours, local cash machines which take Visa cards, a holiday checklist, emergency telephone numbers, practical advice on the best way to buy foreign currency and – new this year – a guide to speciality foods and drinks.

Thomas Cook and MoneyGram have combined to offer an instant worldwide money transfer service for holiday-makers, migrant workers and expats. Money can be sent from any of Thomas Cook's 400 UK shops to 20,000 MoneyGram outlets in banks and shops in 80 countries. Transactions are expressed in US dollars, converted at the travellers' cheque rate and distance is no object. Minimum fee is \$20 to send up to \$400.

Cheshire Building Society is launching a new fixed-rate bond paying 6.75 per cent gross annual interest or 6.50 per cent paid monthly on amounts from £5,000 to £20,000. Rates rise 0.25 per cent on higher sums and the rate is guaranteed until the end of 1998.

Norwich & Peterborough Building

Society is introducing a Coverguard personal accident and sickness plan which pays benefit for up to 12 months and can be used to protect overall income, not just mortgage payments and basic bills. It is available to non-customers and premiums start at £2 a month depending on age, sex, occupation, lifestyle and level of cover.

TSB is offering a range of fixed-rate mortgages, at 6.74 per cent for three years, 7.74 per cent for five years and 8.74 per cent for 10 years. Loans are up to 95 per cent of valuation. A 100 per cent mortgage is available at 8.74 per cent fixed for five years. Valuations are free up to £300 but early redemption penalties apply and arrangement fees of up to £250 will be charged (£50 for first-time buyers and 100 per cent loans).

The top performing personal equity plan over the last five years is Hill Samuel's UK Emerging Market Trust, with a 270 per cent gain over the period, according to brokers Chase de Vere. Other top providers include Morgan Grenfell and Jupiter. The best investment trust PEP is still Murray Enterprise Trust at 479 per cent.

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24 July 1996

Update



Overseeing a share dealing revolution: Iain Saville, chief executive of Crest, which started trading this week

## Paperless share dealing has arrived but private investors needn't panic

Hold on to your share certificates for the time being, writes Tony Lyons

Monday 15 July saw the launch of Crest, the new electronic share settlement system. Share trades will begin to be settled through the new system from 19 August, when 19 companies, of which the largest is English China Clays, will transfer to Crest.

By April 1997, the vast majority of the 2,800 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange will have introduced the new means of paperless share transaction.

Before Crest, all stock market dealings involved the physical delivery of share certificates, the movement of large amounts of cash and a lot of associated paperwork. Crest does away with all this, offering an electronic alternative. It is being used by stockbrokers, banks and other finance institutions for settlement and replaces Talisman, the Stock Exchange's previous settlement system.

Many private investors are naturally worried about what the change will mean for them. Does this mean that all the near-10 million private shareholders in this country will have to manage their investments differently? In the vast majority of cases, the answer is no.

Most investors hold shares for the long term, irrespective of whether they buy for income or capital growth. Because of all the privatisation issues, most have bought their shares in the high street through their banks, building societies or other share shops or through newspaper advertisements and do not have a relationship with a stockbroker.

Despite the introduction of Crest, nothing need change for these investors. They should hold on to their share certificates.

Even those who do use a stockbroker but do not trade actively, should stay as they are. "If you are not going to trade, stay in paper," says Tim May of Carr Sheppards, another leading firm of private client stockbrokers.

The impact of Crest is going to be felt by those who use a stockbroker to trade in shares, dealing more than a few times a year,

whether they use an execution-only service or the more traditional kind of stockbroker. If they are happy to have the broker deal with everything and do not want a direct relationship with the company they are investing in, they can put their securities into a nominee account.

This will mean the broker collecting together shares on behalf of many private investors, with only the broker's name appearing on the company's register. This will change the investor's relationship with the company. Although the client is the beneficial owner the name that appears on the share register will be that of the nominee, the legal owner.

This could cause potential problems. Annual reports, other notices or communication and company perks are usually only offered to those named on the share register. Some companies, for example, will not offer perks or more than one annual report to nominees.

Some brokers offer "designated" nominee accounts rather than "pooled" ones. This means the broker will be sent the requisite number of accounts or perks for distributing to investors.

"If designated, the investor can be identified and dealt with directly," comments Tim May. "Shareholdings can be checked independently via the company registrar in a way that cannot be done with pooled accounts."

"If you elect to go into a nominee account," warns Gill Nott, chief executive of ProShare, which promotes wider share ownership, "ask your broker if he will send you information from the company, such as scrip dividends, notice of rights issues, and so on."

If investors want to retain title to their shares, having a traditional relationship and receiving notices directly from their companies, they can become a sponsored member. This is a new kind of account to allow dealing to occur electronically through the stockbroker. "Effectively the investor is setting up his own electronic record, with his or

her own name on the register," says Tim May.

"Ideally all investors should be sponsored members," says Gill Nott, "and keep their own name on the company registers".

But do beware. Not all private client stockbrokers are offering the sponsored membership to clients. There are also significant differences in what those brokers offering the service will charge for the facility. Crest is charging £20 for each sponsored member. Brokers such as Carr Sheppards and Brewin Dolphin are absorbing this and not making any charge to the client. Others, however, will be charging for the service which could be as much as £70 or more.

And what of the millions of investors who will not be making the change, keeping their share certificates? The only difference they will notice under Crest is when they eventually come to sell their shares.

At present, the transfer of cash for buying or selling shares is meant to be settled five days after the transaction, called T+5. In reality, most private investors settle within 10 to 20 days after the deal.

Under Crest, the cost of dealing for investors who retain their share certificates will increase. Some time in the next year or so, Stock Exchange dealings are expected to move to T+3, settlement within three days of the transaction.

Because of all the paperwork involved, it will be impossible to physically transfer share certificates and money in this time. Investors could find the prices offered for buying and selling shares for will not be as keen as those they see on the stock market screens - maybe an extra penny or more either way. Brokers are likely to make an extra charge for handling share certificates. Many have yet to decide what this will be.

ProShare provides a free guide to Crest to anyone sending a stamped self-addressed envelope to ProShare, Library Chambers, 13-14 Basinghall Street, London EC2V 5BQ.

## Diminishing returns for savers

Clifford German reports on changes in National Savings and other rates

The National Savings movement has flagged a further reduction in savings rates, in spite of the signals coming out of the Bank of England that interest rates will need to rise over the next two years.

The rate on First Option Bonds has been cut immediately from 6.25 per cent to 6 per cent gross, although the bonus for amounts over £20,000 remains at 0.25 per cent.

The rate paid on Income Bonds comes down from 6.25 per cent to 6 per cent from the end of August, and interest on Investment Accounts has also been scaled down by 0.25 per cent to 4.75 per cent on amounts under £500 and 5.25 per cent on sums up to £25,000.

The reductions reflect the fall in yields on gilt-edged stock following the last cut in base rates, but there have been two cuts

in base rates since National Savings rates were last changed in January, Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, explains.

Bond rates have also been drifting downwards in the last few weeks, but have now steadied, according to Baronworth Investment Services, and no major downward changes are anticipated in the near future.

The best one-year rate on amounts under £3,000 is 3.05 per cent from Premium Life, and on up to £5,000 4.62 per cent from Pinnacle Insurance. Over £10,000 the best is 4.73 per cent from AIG.

Rates improve on investments over two years, with Premium Life paying 4.2 per cent gross on amounts from £1,000 up to £3,000 and Pinnacle Insurance paying the best rate of 5.67 per cent on sums from

£3,000 to £50,000. Over three years Premium Life again makes the best offer on small sums, at 4.8 per cent up to £3,000, while ITT London & Edinburgh is best on amounts up to £10,000, paying 6.03 per cent.

Over five years the best is 5.55 per cent up to £3,000 from Premium Life, and Pinnacle offers 6.6 per cent up to £10,000 rising to 6.65 per cent up to £50,000.

Portman Building Society is cutting interest on its instant access account to 4.5 per cent gross from Monday, the first reduction in seven months, but it remains the best paying "genuine" instant account in the top 20, with a minimum balance of only £100. Portman's One Year Bond, paying 6 per cent gross on as little as £500, will remain on offer until the end of the month.

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# Costly car chase for my stolen number plate

A personalised registration should be a good investment. But advertising man Jason Rowe fell foul of the letter of the law, as he told Corrine Simcock

Jason Rowe, 30, is creative services director with the advertising agency Duckworth Finn Grubb Waters, which he joined in 1990. His career began in the accounts department of Bartle Bogle Hegarty in 1986 after studying production techniques at the London College of Printing. Today his clients include Abbey National, the Health Education Authority and Toshiba.

"In 1960 my father bought a personalised registration plate - SE7 - both as a gift and an investment for my mother, Shirley Eaton. By the time my parents moved to France in 1988, the 'mark' - as they're known in the trade - was worth £17,000. They gave it to me to look after in their absence, and I paid £80 to have it transferred to my Fiat.

When I was given a company car, I paid another £80 to have the mark transferred again. But disaster struck when in March 1992 the car was stolen.

The battle that followed is a good lesson for anyone thinking of investing in a personalised registration plate, for I became a victim of the small print and spent the next couple of years fighting for rights which, as it turned out, I didn't actually have.

The first bit was fairly straightforward. I reported the theft at my local police station, filled out the relevant insurance forms and rang the Cherished Number Plate Section at the DVLC to find out how I could recover the mark. They said I would have to wait 12 months from the time the car was stolen before it could be reissued.

When the year was up I rang back again. I had several conversations with different people which got me absolutely nowhere, so I wrote a letter. The response was very worrying: it said that I had lost the right to the mark and that the insurance company was now the legal owner.

I went back to the insurance company, which wrote an appropriate disclaimer saying it had no interest in the mark, and I sent it to the DVLC, assuming my problems would be over. Six weeks later I got a reply reiterating that I had lost my right to display the mark. It said



the DVLC was not prepared to get involved in what it considered to be a civil matter. However, if I wanted to write back enclosing £5 they would release the details of the person who by this time had acquired it. At that point I felt I had no option but to get solicitors involved.

It subsequently transpired that the car had been recovered in December 1992 and sold, together with the number plate. Since then, the plate had been transferred to a number of other vehicles and was now in the hands of someone who had bought it for £6,000.

I couldn't see how this could possibly be legal

and urged my solicitors to pursue the matter.

Meanwhile, in a letter to the man who is currently in possession of the plate, the DVLC confirmed that "Mr Rowe had previously lost entitlement to display the mark; indeed, the mark was passed through several hands before you 'purchased' it." Understandably, he refused to return it, though he did offer to sell it back to me. I refused on a matter of principle to pay for something which I regarded as already mine.

My solicitors advised me to issue a court injunction preventing him from selling the plate, which I duly did. Unfortunately, under the terms

of the injunction, I was liable to compensate him if he suffered any financial loss as a result, so when he received an offer for £8,500 I was forced to lift it. By this time I had spent around £2,500 on legal fees, and I was totally frustrated by what appears to be a loophole in the system whereby innocent persons are left without any legal redress.

Thankfully the Department of Transport took the matter seriously, and after looking into it, sent a sympathetic letter to my MP explaining what had happened.

"The essential point is that a mark is assigned

Unlucky number: Jason Rowe's SE7 plate was worth £17,000 before thieves took a hand

to a vehicle and remains with it until the vehicle is scrapped (or exported) or its transfer is authorised to another vehicle. Entitlement to a mark passes with the vehicle from one keeper to the next. Mr Rowe recognised the consequences in the declaration he signed when agreeing to the transfer from his private car to one leased by his employer," it continued. (This of course is why you should always read the small print.) "His company car was registered in the name of the leasing company and there appears to have been no agreement to safeguard Mr Rowe's interest in the mark."

Following settlement of the insurance claim in June 1992, the DVLA was notified that interest in the vehicle had passed to the insurance company. "In the meantime Mr Rowe had apparently enquired of DVLA about recovering a registration mark from a stolen vehicle and was told that the registered keeper could apply for its return after one year if the vehicle had not been recovered."

The report was entirely accurate; it's just that I hadn't realised I was no longer the registered keeper. So when the DVLC received an application for a registration document for the stolen car, in accordance with normal procedures it informed the police, who interviewed the applicant and subsequently removed the stolen mark from DVLA's records. Entitlement to the mark had passed with the vehicle, which had never been registered in my name.

The moral of the story is that if you invest in a personalised registration plate, take professional advice before transferring it to a company car. In any case, make sure it is insured against theft. It won't compensate for the loss of something of sentimental value, but at least you'll get your money back.

Corrine Simcock would like to hear from readers who also have stories to tell of bad deals, to help others avoid them.

## Plenty of offers to help you pay for a new P-reg motor

Clifford German examines some of the financing and leasing deals available as the trade prepares for an August boom

The Chancellor of the Exchequer will presumably be pleased to hear that the motor trade is expecting a boom in new car sales when the new "P" registrations start next month, but Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, will not.

Autoglass, the windscreen repair and replacement company, says 36 per cent of drivers polled by its Confidence Index expect to change cars this year, compared with 27 per cent last year and 33 per cent in 1994. In London the proportion rises to 45 per cent.

With 25 per cent of all new cars being bought in the month of August alone, sending a stream of older cars into the second-hand market, the result could be a £5bn spurge.

Moneyfacts, the Norfolk-based database, reports today that, anticipating a boom, several lenders, including the AA (0800-605030), First Direct (0800-242424), the Halifax, Nationwide, Alliance & Leicester, Bank of Scotland, HFC Bank and TSB (local branches), have cut their interest rates on unsecured loans to buy new or used cars, and in some cases thrown in free services to woo the buyers.

First Direct, for example, charges an annual percentage rate of 15.9 per cent on car loans up to £2,450 over three years, reducing to 10.9 per cent on loans over £10,000. Meanwhile the AA charges 16.7 per cent APR on amounts under £2,000, falling to 12.7 per cent over £10,000, but throws in a £20 refund on an AA

inspection of the car, £20 off AA car insurance, a two-month repayment holiday and the addition of AA Relay service for AA members.

But Moneyfacts points out that, while these special rates are attractive, many general unsecured loans also offer competitive rates, ranging from 12.8 per cent at Direct Line and 12.9 per cent at Hamilton Direct.

But most rates work out much more expensive if borrowers also take out insurance to take over the payments if they lose their jobs for one reason or another. It costs £206.82 a month to borrow £6,000 over three years from the AA but the payments leap to £241.71 if the borrower wants to cover the payments with credit insurance.

Hire purchase rates are also being trimmed to catch the boom, and dealers will be making their own offers.

Company cars are expected to make up the bulk of sales in the first month of the new registration year, in spite of the increasingly onerous tax burdens that successive Chancellors have imposed on the traditional perk.

With this in mind, Lease Plan, which has offices in Windsor, Manchester and Edinburgh, is bringing in a new personal leasing product called Freedom Drive, which it claims offers all the peace of mind of a company car without the penalties of benefit-in-kind taxation.

Customers are required to put down an ini-

tial payment of 15 per cent followed by 36 monthly payments by direct debit. They can use their own money or cash provided by employers in lieu of a company car. A Rover 600 620SI costing £13,581 retail would cost £369.14 a month inclusive of all maintenance, repairs, vehicle licence, breakdown recovery and insurance and a mileage limit of 10,000 a year. A loan to buy the car outright would cost £580.05 a month.

Lease Plan's commercial director, Steve Dunn, claims that many customers are confused by car leasing deals with several options, so Lease Plan allows them simply to walk away from the car when the agreement ends after three years.

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## Best borrowing rates

Telephone	% Rate and period	Max adv %	Fee	Incentive	Redemption penalty
<b>Fixed rates</b>					
Scarborough BS 0800 590547	0.20 for 1 year	85	0.75%	—	1st 5 yrs: 7.04% of sum repaid
West Bromwich BS 0121 525 7070	8.55 to 1/1/99	85	£295	£300 cash rebate	1st 5 yrs: 6% of advance
First Mortgage BS 0800 080088	7.40 to 1/8/01	90	£275	—	to 1/8/02: 5% of advance
<b>Variable rates</b>					
Hinckley & Rugby BS 0800 774499	0.00 for 9 months	70	£250	Free valuation	1st 5 yrs: disc red'd & 3 m mt
Principality BS 01222 344188	3.60% to 1/10/98	90	—	—	to 30/9/01: discount reclaimed
Bradford & Bingley BS 0800 252993	5.54 for 5 years	85	—	6 mths free ASL	1st 5 yrs: 6 mths mt
<b>First time buyers fixed rates</b>					
Bristol & West BS 0800 680888	0.95 to 30/6/97	90	£275	—	to 30/6/01: 8/6 mths interest
Lambeth BS 0800 225221	4.19 to 1/8/98	95	£295	0.5% of adv rebated	1st 5 yrs: 5 mths mt & rebat red
Northern Rock BS 0800 391500	7.49 to 1/8/01	95	£295	—	1st 5 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
<b>First time buyers variable rates</b>					
Principality BS 01222 344188	1.00 to 1/7/97	90	—	—	to 30/6/01: discount reclaimed
Northern Rock BS 0800 391500	4.24% to 1/8/99	95	£295	—	1st 7 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Halifax BS 0800 101110	5.43 to 30/9/01	90	—	£300 & free valn	to 30/9/03: 1-4% of advance

Telephone	APR	Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)
<b>Unsecured</b>		
Direct Line 0141 248 9966	13.90E	With insurance £112.86 Without insurance £101.33
Alliance & Leicester 0116 262 6262	14.80	£114.93 £102.36
Midland Bank 0800 180180	14.90	£115.82 £102.49
<b>Secured (second charge)</b>		
Clydesdale Bank 0800 240024	7.50	Neg £3K - £15K 6 mths to 25 years
Bank of Scotland 0131 523 7023	8.70	70% £2.5K-£100K 3 years to retirement
Barclays Bank 0800 000929	9.3/9.6 wof 1.8.96	80% £10K-75K 5 to 25 years

Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	Unauthorised % pm	APR
<b>Overdrafts</b>				
Woolwich BS 0800 400900	Current	0.76	9.5	2.18
Alliance & Leicester 0500 959595	Alliance	0.76	9.5	2.20
Abbey National 0500 200500	Current	0.94	11.9	2.18

Telephone	Card Type	Min Income	Rate % pm	APR %	Annual Fee	Int. free period
<b>Standard</b>						
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.8958	11.20	nil	0 days
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	Master Card/Visa	—	1.00	14.00	£12	56 days
People's Bank Conn 0500 551055	MasterCard/Visa	—	1.13	14.40	nil	56 days
<b>Gold cards</b>						
Co-operative Bank 0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.4792	10.32	£120	46 days
Royal Bank of Scotland 01702 362890	Visa	£20,000	1.05N	14.50N	£35	46 days
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	Visa	£20,000	1.14	15.90	£35	56 days

Telephone	Payment by direct debit % pm	Payment by other methods % pm	APR
<b>John Lewis</b>			
in store	—	1.39	18.00
Marks & Spencer 01244 681681	1.87	1.97	26.30
Seas in store	1.94	2.20	29.80

APR: Annualised percentage rate. B-C Buildings and Contents insurance LTV (Loan to value) ASL: Accident, sickness and unemployment  
E: Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years.  
N: Introductory rate for a limited period.

All rates subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01682 500677 18 July 1996

## Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
<b>INSTANT ACCESS</b>					
Portman BS 01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.80	Year
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Liquidity	Instant	£25,000	5.25	Year
Shipton BS 01756 705111	High Street	Instant	£30,000	5.50	Year
Direct Line 0181 687 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£50,000	5.75	Year
<b>INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS</b>					
Yorkshire BS 0800 378836	First Class Access	Postal	£1,000	4.90	Year
Alliance & Leicester BS 0645 645660	Instant Direct	Postal	£5,000	5.40	Year
Bristol & West BS 0800 901109	Instant Access Postal	Postal	£10,000	5.85	Year
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Great North Postal	Postal	£25,000	6.50 A	Year
<b>NOTICE ACCOUNTS &amp; BONDS</b>					
Coventry BS 0345 665322	Postal 50	50 day P	£2,000	5.45	Year
Coventry BS 0345 665322	Postal 50	50 day P	£10,000	6.10	Year
First National BS 0800 558844	90 Day Notice	90 day P	£10,000	6.20	Year
Scarborough BS 0800 505078	Scarborough 100	100 day	£1,000	6.50	Year
<b>CHEQUE ACCOUNTS</b>					
Klownmont Benson 01202 502404	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.00	Month
Halifax BS 01422 333333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	4.30	Quarter
Chelsea BS 0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.75	Year
Chelsea BS 0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£25,000	5.00	Year
<b>FIXED RATE BONDS</b>					
Bristol & West BS 0800 202121	Year Plus Fixed Bond	5/11/97	£5,000	6.50F	Maturity
Universal BS 0800 281496	Fixed Rate Bond	2 year	£5,000	7.00F	Year
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Classic Deposit Bond	30/9/99	£2,500	7.50F	Year
Banquos BS 0800 132504	High Income Bond	1/10/2001	£50,000	7.75F	Year
<b>FIRST TESSAS</b>					
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	—	5 years	£8,575	7.50F	Year
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	—	5 years	£5,000	7.45F	Year
Birmingham Midshires 0645 720721	—	5 years	£1,000	7.25	Year
Principality BS 01222 344188	—	5 years	£500	7.00	Year
<b>FOLLOW-ON TESSAS</b>					
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	—	5 years	£9,000	7.50F	Year
Universal BS 0500 505000	—	5 years	£9,000	7.50	Year
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	—	5 years	£5,000	7.45F	Year
Birmingham Midshires 0645 720721	—	5 years	£1,000	7.25	Year
<b>GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (net)</b>					
Financial Assurance 0181 380 3389	—	1 year	£5,000	4.60FN	Year
Pinnacle Assurance 0181 207 9007	—	2 years	£3,000	6.55FN	Year
Pinnacle Assurance 0181 207 9007	—	3 years	£3,000	5.90FN	Year
Pinnacle Assurance 0181 270 9007	—	4 years	£3,000	6.40FN	Year
Pinnacle Assurance 0181 207 9007	—	5 years	£3,000	6.55FN	Year
<b>OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)</b>					
Northern Rock, Guern 01481 714600	Offshore Instant	Instant	£50,000	6.60	Year
Northern Rock, Guern 01481 714600	Millennium Bond	1/1/00	£10,000	7.50F	Year
Britannia International 01624 628512	2 Year Bond	31/7/98	£5,000	7.00F	Year
Skipton, Guern 01481 727374	3 Year Bond	30/9/99	£10,000	7.40F	Year
<b>NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (gross)</b>					
Investment Accounts	—	1 month	£20	4.75	Year
Income Bonds	—	3 months	£500	5.25	Year
Capital Bonds	—	12 months	£25,000	5.50	Year
First Option Bonds	Series 1	5 years	£20,000	6.00	Month
Pensioners' Guaranteed Income Bond	Series 3	5 years	£100	6.65F	Maturity
NS Certificates (tax-free)	43rd issue	5 years	£1,000	6.00F	Year
Children's Bond	9th Index linked	5 years	£25	6.25F	Year
	Issue H	5 years	£100	6.55F	Year
		5 years	£25	6.75F	Maturity

P: post only F: fixed rate  
N: net rate A: All withdrawals subject to 30 day loss of interest  
All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01682 500677 18 July 1996

FEAR OF FINANCE  
Clifford German

Last week it was the unit trust movement advancing its cause as a cheap investment vehicle for long-term savers, and lobbying the Government for tax reforms to allow unit trusts to compete with pension funds on equal terms. This week the advocates of direct investment have had their say, promoting their own wares and asking for tax concessions to give a level playing field.

The committee set up last autumn under the chairmanship of Sir Mark Weinberg to look into measures to promote wider share ownership reported this week. It found that the number of private shareholders has fallen from a peak of 11 million in 1990 to around 9.5 million now, but still many more than before the privatisation process began in the early 1980s. But small shareholders accounted for an ever-smaller proportion of the total volume of shares.

The committee is asking for the same tax favours for shares as other investments enjoy. It emphasised the need for simplicity and a campaign to educate young people in particular in the ways of personal finance.

Even more important, however, is the need for brokers to make share dealing less daunting and, above all, cheaper for ordinary folk, including the 3 million investors who have savings in excess of £5,000 yet hold no shares.

The Share Centre, one of the new breed of share dealing operations established since Big Bang to compete with the traditional stockbrokers, has taken the lead in trying to encourage more investors by cutting the minimum purchase commission on its Economy Share Account from £7.50 to just £2.50 for each purchase.

Investors still have to pay stamp duty of 0.5 per cent, helping to raise £1.2bn a year for the Treasury, but, says the Share Centre's chief

executive Gavin Oldham, the Government could abolish stamp duty on deals of less than £10,000 at a cost of only £50m a year, reducing the current yield of the duty by less than 5 per cent, and challenging major dealers not to split up their own deals to evade duty. Crest, the new trading and settlement system which will gradually replace the existing Talisman system, could also do its share by confining its central charges of £2-£3 a transaction to deals worth over £100,000.

Crest has made a great song and dance this week to try and reassure the small investor that nothing will change, immediately at least. But as the stock market moves steadily to electronic share transfers and shortens settlement periods it is inevitable that small investors with a cheque book and share certificates will feel at a disadvantage.

It seems probable that they will be pushed, or rather priced, into opening nominee accounts, although nominee accounts will increasingly alienate the small investors by denying them the right to attend company meetings or receive annual reports or shareholder perks. That could be overcome only if the Stock Exchange establishment insists on changing the rules so that small investors have the same rights as big investors.

The Stock Exchange could do even more, says the Share Centre, by allowing all private shareholders access to rights issues, and changing the rules to encourage companies launching new issues on the Stock Exchange to offer the shares to the public rather than placing them all with institutions in order to reduce costs.

Whether any of this can overcome the small investor's suspicion that the odds are loaded against him by the big institutions is another matter.

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THE  
WEEK  
AHEAD

## Television

by Gerard Gilbert

**Monday**  
If I Were Prime Minister 8pm C4. Chris Tame, Director of the Liberation Alliance, would privatise all public spaces, end all censorship, and the citizenry and legalise drugs (5667).  
Film: A Room with a View (James Ivory 1985). UK 9pm C4 (above). Helena Bonham Carter falls for free-thinking Julian Sands in Merchant-Ivory's breakthrough EM Forster hit (80551735).  
Double Exposure 11.15pm BBC2. Season of screenplays by writers new to TV begins with Tim Lohan's Belfast-set black comedy (741700).

**Tuesday**  
True Stories: Edge of Madness 9pm C4. Four individuals and their schizophrenia, including a woman who believed that she caused the Kobe earthquake (3588).  
Out of This World 9.30pm BBC1. Yet more paranormal TV, this time presented by the supposedly rational Carol Vorderman and Chris Choi (above) (824526).  
Film: City of Hope (John Sayles 1991). US 10.30pm C4. The townships at the heart of New Jersey, brilliantly brought to life (58559830).

**Wednesday**  
Inside Story 9.30pm BBC1 (above). How in Canada in 1934 a family of identical twins were taken away from their real parents and isolated in a hospital "for their own good" (982453).  
Century of Cinema 12pm C4. One hundred years of German cinema, encompassing some of the most controversial names - from Leni Riefenstahl to Fassbinder (7475854).  
Film: The Nasty Girl (Michael Verhoeven 1990). US 1.05pm C4. The townships at the heart of New Jersey, brilliantly brought to life (58559830).

**Thursday**  
The Street 8pm BBC2. New consumer series in which a lawyer, a doctor, a building expert and Kirsty Wark descend on a different street each week and sort out its problems (9516).  
Secret History 9pm C4. David Jessel (above), using modern forensic techniques, unravels "the real Jack the Ripper", a man who was originally a prime suspect, but was later released (6380).  
Film: Privates on Parade (Michael Blakemore 1982). UK 10pm C4. John Cleese entertains the troops in 1948 Singapore (57248941).

**Friday**  
After Walks 8pm BBC2. New series in which military historian Professor Richard Holmes (above) unravels the truth about the lives of military figures. First episode: Napoleon (7341).  
Friends 9.30pm C4. Christie Hyde of The Pretenders is the latest in the growing army of celebrities who feel a need to guest-star in American sitcoms (29317).  
The White Room 11.35pm C4. The pared-down and impressive music showcase returns with Mark Morrison and Neneh Cherry (251133).

## Radio

by Robert Hanks

Proms Chamber Music 1996 1pm R3. Fed up with all that big orchestral stuff? The Arditi Quartet launches a new series of lunchtime chamber concerts with late Beethoven, Elliott Carter and Henri Dutilleul's *Ainsi la nuit*.

French Connections 10pm R2. Charlotte Rampling's celebration of French song continues with a look at the great (and rather Belgian) Jacques Brel, including his own performances alongside all those interminable Scott Walker covers.

Suez 1956 7.20pm R4. Forty years on, a pair of programmes looking at "The Crisis" - why Britain, France and Israel charged in - and "The Consequences", which examines, for a change, what the affair did to Egypt.

Volcano 2pm R4 PM. Juliet Stevenson plays a Victorian mill-owner's wife who becomes obsessed with a volcano in New Zealand - its imminent eruption is a metaphor, you won't be surprised to learn, for her own inner turmoil. Subtly, scrumptiously.

One for the Road 12.25pm R4 PM. A new series on natural history and ecology, starting with a look at that shy, lovely creature the hare, and the best way to tell it apart from a delicious meat.

## Sunday television and radio

## BBC1

6.35 **Leslie: The Adventures of Neeka** (Dick Moder 1971). The intelligent pooch does some good work in Alaska (593518).  
7.45 **Moomin** (R) (088179). 8.10 **Playdays** (2756709). 8.30 **Breakfast with Frost** (25711). 9.30 **Olympic Grandstand** (732860). 10.00 **Countryfile** (S) (29570). 12.30 **News**, **ThinkTank** (86179). 1.30 **EastEnders** (R) (S) (224063). 2.55 **Zulu** (Cy Endfield 1964 UK). One hundred and five British soldiers hold out against 4,000 spear-chucking Zulus at Rorke's Drift in this exciting piece of *Boys-Own* Zulu-bashing. Michael Caine, Stanley Baker, Jack Hawkins and Nigel Green make the thin red line (73470773).  
5.05 **Sister Wendy's Story of Painting**. The toothy art-loving nun moves on to northern Europe during the Reformation. First stop, Holbein (7523112).  
5.35 **Tom and Jerry** (627957).  
5.45 **News, Weather** (736247).  
6.05 **Regional News** (704131).  
6.10 **Songs of Praise**. Pam Rhodes begins a 250-mile journey along the River Thames to celebrate the opening of the Thames Path as a National Trail (S) (990888).  
6.45 **Antiques Roadshow**. Valuations from York in 1992, including a Meissen teapot (R) (315247).  
7.30 **The Essential Olympics**. Desmond Lynam introduces highlights including the rowing competition as Steven Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent begin their defence of the coxed pairs title. Plus, the heats of the women's 200m freestyle and the dressage section for the three-day eventers (S) (5676570).  
9.10 **The Writing on the Wall**. See Preview, p28 (S) (333570).  
10.00 **News, Weather** (795286).  
10.15 **Olympic Grandstand**. Introduced by Desmond Lynam. 10.25 **Hockey**. Great Britain's men's hockey team begin their campaign with a match against South Korea. 11.50 **Gymnastics**. The women's team compulsory. 12.46 **Men's 400m individual medley**. 1.15 **Women's 100m breaststroke**. 1.39 **Men's 4 x 200m freestyle relay**. 1.55 **Boxing/Three-Day Eventing/Weightlifting** - including the start of Britain's attempt to win team gold in the three-day eventing competition with the first day of the dressage phase. 5.05 **Boxing/Basketball/Volleyball** (S) (64518537).  
4.25 **Incident at Dark River** (Michael Pressman 1989 US). Eco-conscious drama about a blue-collar worker who challenges his own employers in court after his daughter falls sick after playing near a river polluted by toxic wastes (71196938).  
REGIONS. Wales: 12.00pm *Homeland*.

## BBC2

6.15 **Open University: Non-Euclidean Geometry**. 6.40 **Line Integrals with Curl**. 7.05 **Women in Science and Technology**. 7.30 **Designs for Living**. 7.55 **El Escorial: Palace, Monastery and Mausoleum**. 8.20 **Zimbabwe: Health for All?** 8.45 **The Baptistry, Padua**.  
9.10 **The Good Book Guide** (R) (S) (9618518). 9.25 **First Light** (S) (607976). 9.55 **Spider** (R) (S) (6486150). 10.00 **Fully Booked** (S) (63402). 12.00 **Regional Programmes** (27112).  
12.30 **Sunday Grandstand** introduced by Steve Rider and Sue Barker. 12.35 **Golf**. The Open: live coverage of the final round of the 125th Open from Royal Lytham and St Anne's Golf Club. 2.00 **Golf**. The Open/Olympic Rowing: continued coverage of the Open, and rowing action as Steve Redgrave begins his bid for a fourth consecutive gold medal in the coxed pairs, with Matthew Pinsent. At 2.30 **Golf**. The Open. (S) (6291512).  
4.40 **Olympics**. Further action from Atlanta may be sacrificed if the British Open golf goes into a play-off (12125957).  
7.30 **William Morris: The Earthly Paradox**. Centenary profile of William Morris, the paradox being that this socialist is now best remembered for designing wallpapers that are the essence of middle-class Englishness. See Preview, p28 (634044).  
8.20 **Coastalman**. Checking out the biggest, fastest, highest, and of course most terrifying rollercoasters in the world, with a repeat history of white-knuckle rides (R) (S) (154044).  
9.10 **Olympic Grandstand**. Sue Barker introduces the latest action from Atlanta, including gymnastics, weightlifting and fencing. Plus, baseball, volleyball, water polo and wrestling (3014792).  
10.15 **Last Friday Night's Armistice** (S) (965957).  
10.45 **Golf**. The Open. Dougie Donnelly presents the day's highlights (S) (286179).  
11.25 **Motorcycling**. Highlights of today's Grand Prix 500cc event from Donington Park (S) (595599).  
12.10 **84 Charlie Mopic** (Patrick Duncan 1989 US). This excellent season of independent US movies continues with an original film about the Vietnam War, going into combat with a two-man documentary film team. A bad queue-making, as its largely filmed with hand-held cameras. (Then Weather) (531261). To 1.50am.  
2.00 **The Learning Zone: Summer Nights: Sporting Chance Essentials** (92445). 4.00 **Languages: Learning Languages** (92629). 5.00 **Business and Work: Italy Means Business** (51984). 5.30 **The Essential History of Europe** (42193). To 6.00am.  
REGIONS. Wales: 12.00pm *Welsh Lobby*. Scotland: 12.00pm *Scottish Lobby* 8.20 *Anglo on Burns*. NI: 12.00pm *Ulster in Focus* 12.20 *Warlike Weddings*

## ITV/London

6.00 **GMTV** (58537). 8.00 **Disney Adventures** (5561976). 9.25 **Tales from the Cryptkeeper** (S) (650310). 9.50 **James Bond Jr** (6105247). 10.15 **Link** (S) (206696). 10.30 **Morning Worship** (S) (60131). 11.30 **The Rock That Girded Away** (265589). 11.50 **Many Questions** (1485570). 12.30 **Citylink** (9791624). 12.55 **London Today** (62871063). 1.00 **News and Weather** (76186353). 1.10 **The Agenda** (5895570). 2.00 **Capital Holidays** (2957). 2.30 **Cartoon Time** (8869421).  
2.45 **The Plot to Kill Hitler** (Lawrence Schiller 1990 US). Docu-drama based on the true story of a small band of disillusioned Nazi officers, led by Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, who attempted to assassinate the Führer. Starring Brad Davis and Ian Richardson (91458570).  
4.30 **Thessalus** (266).  
5.00 **Upstairs, Downstairs** (R) (5044).  
6.00 **London Tonight** (Followed by *LWT Weather*) (839266).  
6.25 **News and Weather** (715247).  
6.35 **Dr Quinn, Medicine Woman** (S) (521711).  
7.30 **Faith in the Future**. *Sitcom* (R) (S) (955).  
8.00 **Wycliffe**. The Cornish detective puzzles over why a psychiatrist's wife was murdered in an seemingly unprovoked attack (S) (5402).  
9.00 **The Knock**. Customs and Excise drama. Bill arranges for a wounded Savoyite to be flown to London Airport to identify Montfort (S) (5266).  
10.00 **News and Weather** (940614).  
10.15 **Flux** (R) (S) (1806025).  
11.10 **The South Bank Show**. Two films this week. The first follows the fortunes of Maxine Peake, a 21-year-old from Bolton who achieves her dream of securing a place at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA). Then, in New Orleans, acclaimed trumpeter and composer Wynton Marsalis explores the history of jazz (709505).  
12.10 **Into Thin Air** (Roger Young 1988 Can). Drama based on the true story of a Canadian teenager who vanishes without trace after leaving Ottawa for a summer school in Boulder, Colorado. Starring Ellen Burstyn, Robert Prosky, and Sam Robards (1275193).  
2.00 **The Chart Show** (R) (S) (81984).  
3.00 **Anna - Ballerina: The Movie Sequel** (Frank Strecker 1988 US). Auto-sequel to a fairly moving film about a middle-aged Czech immigrant living in New York - once a star in her own country - who takes a younger into her care and shows her the ropes (723377).  
4.35 **Flux** (R) (S) (1806025).  
5.30 **News** (46919). To 6.00am.

## Channel 4

6.40 **The Great Maratha** (8393063).  
7.05 **Madeline** (S) (4552570).  
7.30 **The Real Life Adventures of Professor Thompson** (73559).  
8.00 **Dropout** (R) (S) (2651155).  
8.20 **The Sheep Dogs** (6356763).  
8.45 **Cardinals and Dinosaurs** (S) (3020957).  
9.20 **Saved by the Bell** (R) (6502421).  
9.45 **Sister Sister** (S) (180179).  
10.15 **Happy Days** (R) (5385773).  
10.40 **Mission Impossible** (1221353).  
11.40 **The Waltons** (R) (2016976).  
12.40 **The Divorce of Lady X** (Tim Whelan 1938 UK). Top names in their youthful prime, and all the expense of early Technicolor - but Korda's production job is wasted on a pretty thin comedy starring Merle Oberon, Laurence Olivier and Ralph Richardson (77833112).  
2.20 **Of Dice and Men**. Animation (38369063).  
2.30 **Sunday in New York** (Peter Tewksbury 1963 US). Innocent and jolly enough sex comedy with Jane Fonda determined to lose her virginity to journalist Dr Taylor on the day they meet, after she discovers that her apparently highly moral brother (Cliff Robertson) is sleeping with his girlfriend (Jo Morrow) (32773).  
4.30 **Love and Marriage** (R) (S) (808).  
5.00 **The Lost Believers**. The Post Laureate wanders around 1960s Weston-Super-Mare. (Followed by *News Summary and Weather*) (R) (S) (8523131).  
5.35 **Desmonds** (R) (S) (574266).  
6.05 **Babylon 5** (S) (953515).  
7.00 **Tour De France**. The final day - and the victor rides down the Champs-Élysées (4315).  
7.30 **Snakes and Eagles** (S) (537).  
8.00 **Encounters**. Towards the end of the 1980s, reports began to emerge from the forests of northern Nepal of a huge beast, which was larger than any known Asian elephant. Explorer Colonel John Blashford-Snell and palaeontologist Dr Adrian Lister investigate. See Preview, p28 (S) (3044).  
9.00 **Mr A-S-H** (Robert Altman 1970 US). See *The Big Picture*, p28 (80584063).  
11.10 **For Love** (Robert Altman 1985 US). Altman's stark and over-reverent opening-up of Sam Shepherd's steamy and often very funny stage play. It's the story of a down-and-out rodeo cowboy (Shepherd himself) and his near-incestuous relationship with his half-sister, Kim Basinger (surprisingly good). Harry Dean Stanton and Randy Quaid co-star (S) (742421).  
1.10 **Ek Hi Rasta** (BR Chopra 1986 India). Powerful human drama about a widow whose friendship with her late husband's friend starts some damaging gossip (95011483). To 3.55am.

## ITV/Regions

**Wales**  
As London except: 2.00pm *Highway to Heaven* (740880). 2.55 *Five Star Vegas* (5912362). 5.15 *Cartoons* (8665624). 5.25 *Teletext*. 5.30 *News*. 5.45 *Midweek* (63151). 12.00 *News*. 1.15 *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean* (25676321). 2.35am *Open Gate* (507235). 2.55am *Best of British*. 3.00am *Open Gate* (507235). 3.30am *Open Gate* (507235). 4.35am *Open Gate* (507235).  
**Yorkshire**  
As London except: 12.30pm *Times Newswatch* (9791624). 2.00 *The Jury* (2572). 2.30 *Five Star Vegas* (5912362). 2.55 *Cartoons*. 3.00 *News*. 3.15 *Open Gate* (507235). 3.30am *Open Gate* (507235). 3.55am *Open Gate* (507235).  
**Central**  
As London except: 12.30pm *Central Newswatch* (9791624). 2.00 *The Jury* (2572). 2.30 *Five Star Vegas* (5912362). 2.55 *Cartoons*. 3.00 *News*. 3.15 *Open Gate* (507235). 3.30am *Open Gate* (507235). 3.55am *Open Gate* (507235).  
**ITV**  
As London except: 12.25pm *West: Faith at Work* (7117247). *Wales: International Young Guns* (7117247). 2.00 *Emmerdale* (2318929). 2.30 *West: International*. At *Touring Cars* (1060624). *Wales: Film: Casanova's Big Night* (7937052). 3.50 *West: International*. *Big Night* (251402). 4.35 *West: International*. 5.25 *West: International*. 5.30 *West: International*. 5.35am *Open Gate* (507235). 5.55am *Open Gate* (507235). 6.00am *Open Gate* (507235).  
**ITV**  
As London except: 12.30pm *Cartoon* (6184228). 2.00 *The Per* (6184228). 2.25 *The Per* (6184228). 2.50 *Summer Painting* (402). 3.00 *Peak Performance* (792). 3.30 *Antiques Trail* (247). 4.00 *Cartoon*. 4.30 *Cartoon*. 4.50 *Cartoon*. 5.00 *Cartoon*. 5.15 *Cartoon*. 5.30 *Cartoon*. 5.45 *Cartoon*. 5.55 *Cartoon*. 6.00 *Cartoon*. 6.15 *Cartoon*. 6.30 *Cartoon*. 6.45 *Cartoon*. 6.55 *Cartoon*. 7.00 *Cartoon*. 7.15 *Cartoon*. 7.30 *Cartoon*. 7.45 *Cartoon*. 7.55 *Cartoon*. 8.00 *Cartoon*. 8.15 *Cartoon*. 8.30 *Cartoon*. 8.45 *Cartoon*. 8.55 *Cartoon*. 9.00 *Cartoon*. 9.15 *Cartoon*. 9.30 *Cartoon*. 9.45 *Cartoon*. 9.55 *Cartoon*. 10.00 *Cartoon*. 10.15 *Cartoon*. 10.30 *Cartoon*. 10.45 *Cartoon*. 10.55 *Cartoon*. 11.00 *Cartoon*. 11.15 *Cartoon*. 11.30 *Cartoon*. 11.45 *Cartoon*. 11.55 *Cartoon*. 12.00 *Cartoon*. 12.15 *Cartoon*. 12.30 *Cartoon*. 12.45 *Cartoon*. 12.55 *Cartoon*. 1.00 *Cartoon*. 1.15 *Cartoon*. 1.30 *Cartoon*. 1.45 *Cartoon*. 1.55 *Cartoon*. 2.00 *Cartoon*. 2.15 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## The big picture

M\*A\*S\*H  
Sun 9pm C4

Ring Lardner Jr's script for M\*A\*S\*H had been rejected by a dozen directors by the time it landed on the desk of Robert Altman. In the hands of the maverick filmmaker it became an Oscar-winning hit and, unusually, spawned an equally successful television series. Though episodic, this influential black comedy, showing in C4's Hollywood Block season, highlights the madness of war through the crazed behaviour of two US Army surgeons (Donald Sutherland and Elliott Gould) working in a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital during the Korean War.

This Sunday you are all cordially invited to Page 3 - a Celebration (Sun 1TV), a review of 25 years of the super soaraway Sun's legendary topless pin-up page. Celebrating seems an odd thing to be doing for this particular anniversary, although my own problem with Page Three Girls doesn't stem from any Clare Short-ist belief that it denigrates women. The problem is the sheer sexiness of these babes. Never have so many breasts been bared to so little erotic effect and, in that way, I suppose, it does denigrate women. Anyway, if you're in a mood to celebrate, or merely to ogle at a few mammary glands and their bleached-blond owners, then celebrate. You'll be joined by Denis Law, George Best and Garry Bushell. You'd be better off joining Colonel Blashford-Snell in search of The Beast of Bardia (Sun C4), this week's Encounters offering. The "beast of Bardia" is a large, elephant-like creature occasionally spotted causing havoc in a remote corner of western Nepal. (It's rather fond of salt, and won't let a mere trifle like four walls come between it and a shot of sodium chloride.) Blashford-Snell is leading an assorted party

of scientists and adventurers on an expedition to locate and photograph this beast, which could be some sort of mammoth. The clue seems to be the size of bumps on its head. More intriguingly, there's a slight resemblance to Eddie Izzard about this Blashford-Snell, which is coupled with a reassuring fondness for cocktails at sundown. The thrill of that chase is far more genuine and exciting than anything in The Writing on the Wall (Sun BBC1), a new, four-part "post-cold war thriller". (Aren't we post the post-cold war yet?) It begins with an obligatory gloomy post-Edge of Darkness soundtrack and a series of bombs which go off at various Nato bases across Germany. Is this the work of neo-fascists, old-style Communists, or the Russian mafia? Better call in an M5 counter-terrorism expert - expertly played by Bill Paterson, the man every casting agent pulls in when a certain bleak menace is in order. There's a subplot about an old-style Communist (Lena Stolze) organising a band of rent boys into a terrorist cell, which is symptomatic of the general level of daftness. The writer is PG Duggan.

better known as actor Patrick Malahide, Det Sgt Chisholm from *Minder*. You can almost hear Chisholm's voice during the script's more sardonic moments. The admirable *Dancing in the Street* (Sat BBC2) continues along its badly scheduled way (surely most of its target audience is doing other things on a Saturday night), with a look at the influence of LSD on rock music. Many of the survivors from San Francisco reminded me of that line from the Alex Cox movie *Repo Man*, when Emilio Estevez asks the spaced-out odd-job man whether he "took a lot of acid in the hippy period". A former member of the Grateful Dead remembers how the band "dosed" the Warner Brothers A&R men who had been sent to sign them: "We wanted them to be our friends." And on the subject of flower power, William Morris: the *Earthly Paradise* (Sun BBC2) is a century (of his death) reappraisal of the poet-designer. The paradox is how this revolutionary socialist - and author of *News from Nowhere* - is now best-known for providing wallpaper to the middle classes.



## The big match

Golf: the Open Championship  
Sat 12.30pm BBC1, Sun 12.30pm BBC2

Some American players may complain about links between golf and the British weather, but there is no doubt that the combination of the two makes for some fascinating action in the Open. Royal Lytham and St Anne's Golf Club, where the 125th Open Championship is being held, has seen some marvellous contests over the years. Remember when Seve Ballesteros used all his magical powers to triumph there in 1985? Will Nick Faldo (above) continue his wonderful year and be among the contenders for the claret jug at the end of tomorrow afternoon?

# Saturday television and radio

## BBC1

6.30 *Enchanted Tales* (R) (6501339). 7.25 *News*; *Weather* (3491-07).  
7.30 *Children's BBC*: Oscar's Orchestra. 7.55 *Felix the Cat*. 8.10 *Robinson Crusoe*. 8.30 *Bucky O'Hare*. 8.55 *The Raccons*. 9.20 *Mighty Max*. 9.40 *Grange Hill*. 10.05 *Sweet Valley High*.  
10.27 *Weather* (5492117).  
10.30 *Olympic Grandstand*. Introduced by Sue Barker. 10.35 *Olympic Games: The Opening Ceremony* - another chance to see the opening ceremony of the 26th Olympiad from the Olympic Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia, which took place in the early hours of this morning. David Coleman claps his descriptive powers around the spectacle. 12.30 *Golf: the Open*. Live coverage of the third round of the 125th Open from Royal Lytham and St Anne's Golf Club. 1.00 *News*. 1.05 *Golf and Racing from Newbury*. Further coverage from Royal Lytham and St Anne's interspersed with horse racing. Featuring the 1.30 *Doncaster Bloodstock Sales* Rose Bowl, the 2.00 *Motors* *Donington Castle Conditions* Stakes and the 2.30 *Weatherbys Super Sprint* (S) (50265136).  
5.10 *News*, *Weather* (5675285).  
5.20 *Regional News and Weather* (8623285).  
5.25 *Dad's Army* (R) (7057391).  
5.55 *Full Swing*. Paul Shane, Floella Benjamin and cricketer Devon Malcolm find themselves exchanging golf swings (S) (963662).  
6.25 *Pets Win Prizes* (S) (124488).  
7.05 *The New Adventures of Superman*. Roger Daltrey guests in the last of the series (S) (691730).  
7.50 *The National Lottery Live* Unika Jonsson presents the week's draw with Mystic Meg (S) (216407).  
8.05 *Birds of a Feather* (R) (244597).  
8.35 *Olympic Grandstand*. Further coverage of the first day, including swimming heats (featuring Britain's Karen Pickering, Paul Palmer and Adam Clayton), the judo heavyweight finals, boxing, and the hockey tournament (S) (918730).  
9.30 *News and Sport*, *Weather* (Followed by National Lottery Update) (226865).  
9.50 *Bob Monkhouse on the Spot* (S) (135049).  
10.20 *Olympic Grandstand*. Introduced by Desmond Lynam. 10.30 *Gymnastics/Boating/Weightlifting* - Gymnastics from the men's team competition, plus the opening boxing bouts and weightlifting. 12.25 *Swimming*: medals are decided in the opening day's finals in the pool. 12.31 *Women's 100m freestyle*. 12.45 *Men's 100m breaststroke*. 12.55 *Hockey/Swimming*: Great Britain's women's hockey team begins its campaign for gold with a match against South Korea. 1.09 *Women's 400m individual medley*. 1.39 *Men's 200m freestyle*. 2.25 *Volleyball/Basketball/Boxing* (64548778).  
4.25 *Miss-Takes* (R) (S) (30196421).  
4.40 *The Gallant Hours* (Robert Montgomery 1960 US). Just the thing after a night's Olympics viewing - a biopic of World War II's Admiral Bill Halsey (5889150). To 6.00am.

## BBC2

6.00 *Open University: Women and Organisations* (6896391). 6.25 *Maths* (6882198). 6.50 *Organic Chemistry* (8337407). 7.15 *The Magic Flute*, by Mozart (4514310). 7.40 *A Day in the Life* (9010778). 8.05 *Stand by Your Banner!* (3865933). 8.30 *Born Into Two Cultures* (6712575). 8.55 *The Clinical Psychologist* (724310). 9.20 *Testing Teachers?* (6540681). 9.45 *Understanding Music* (7027581). \* 10.00 *Deadly Quarels* (5324662). 10.35 *Managing Schools* (2523952). \* 11.00 *Sam's Story* (3876952). 11.25 *An English Education* (4746372). 11.50 *Modelling in the Long Term* (2665407). \*  
12.15 *The Spoilers* (Ray Enright 1942 US). The fourth of five screen versions of the Rex Beach Alaskan gold-rush story is really meant as a vehicle for Marlene Dietrich, who is fought over by John Wayne and Randolph Scott (7624056). \*  
1.35 *The Desperadoes* (Charles Vidor 1943 US). Randolph Scott again - and another western, this time co-starring Glenn Ford as a bandit who goes straight and joins forces with sheriff Scott. \*  
3.05 *Olympic Grandstand and Golf: the Open*. Sun. Barker introduces opening-day action from the Olympics, plus coverage of the third round of the golf Open from Royal Lytham and St Anne's Golf Club after 5.00pm. In Atlanta, swimming is the focal point, with British swimmers competing in this afternoon's heats: 3.05 *Women's 100m freestyle*. 3.25 *Men's 100m breaststroke*. 4.00 *Women's 400m individual medley*. 4.30 *Men's 200m freestyle* heats. Plus judo, shooting and women's hockey (S) (33890223).  
7.25 *News and Sport*, *Weather* (611778). \*  
7.40 *Top Gear Live*. Jeremy Clarkson noses round the world's first interactive motor show, being held at Silverstone this week (S) (960556).  
8.10 *The Calling*. We meet trainee priest and former teacher Barbara Bennett, who talks about how Queen's College in Birmingham "broke you and puts you back together again" (S) (229117). \*  
9.00 *Bouncing in the Street: A Book and Roll History* Psychodrama. See Preview, above (S) (8865). \*  
10.00 *Talkin' Over the Asylum*. 2/6. Campbell plans to become a professional DJ and transform the hospital station in Donna Franchischi's repeated BAFTA winner (R) (S) (346391). \*  
10.50 *Golf: the Open*. Dougie Donnelly introduces highlights of today's third round (S) (302117).  
11.30 *The X-Files*. A group of loggers are killed off by a strange parasite (R) (S) (883827). \*  
12.15 *Later with Jools Holland*. Featuring Blur, Garth Brooks, Soul II Soul, Aimee Mann and the Justin Vali Trio (R) (S) (7570353).  
1.20 *Young Musicians* 6/6. Encore. Clarinetist Emma Johnson, winner in 1984, plays Finzi and Poulenc. Last in series. (Followed by *Weatherview*) (S) (6130605). To 1.35am.

## ITV/London

6.00 *GMTV: News and Weather*. 6.10 *Re-Wind*. 6.30 *Bananas in Pyjamas*. 7.10 *Barney and Friends*. 7.40 *Disney's Wake Up in the Wild*. 8.55 *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (1264681).  
9.25 *Scratchy and Co.* With comedian Lenny Beige and *Trojan from Gladiators* (S) (10778049).  
11.30 *The Chart Show* (S) (49198).  
12.30 *Mad Science* (19827).  
1.00 *News and Weather* (72910440).  
1.05 *London Today* (72959339).  
1.10 *Movies, Games and Videos* (5946198).  
1.45 *Cartoon Time* (123320730).  
2.00 *Airwolf* (R) (854630703).  
3.00 *Thunder in Paradise* (S) (6112575).  
3.55 *RoboCop*. Thoroughly tame and sanitised version of the movie (S) (8827204).  
4.50 *News and Weather* (4849759).  
5.05 *London Tonight* (7439933).  
5.25 *Beadle's About* (S) (7059759). \*  
5.55 *Man O'War* Chris Tarrant keeps order as 300 women give their verdict on 10 boys (S) (360778).  
6.55 *You Bet!* Darren Day and Diane Youdale are joined by Vanessa Feltz, Pat Sharp and Johnny Herbert for various unlikely charity challenges (S) (633556). \*  
7.55 *News, Weather, Lottery Result* (Followed by *LWT Weather*) (200846). \*  
8.10 *A Touch of Frost*. A feature-length Frost finds David Jason's downbeat detective faced with the death of a police informer on an estate simmering with racial tension (R) (S) (7684179).  
10.10 *Saturday Live*. Lee Hurst hosts comedy and live music, with Harry Hill and Alan Parker Urban Warrior (S) (548662).  
11.10 *Legacy of Lies* (Bradford May 1992 US). Epic tale of a cop who must come to terms with his family's criminal background. While investigating a murder, he discovers that his father, an ex-cop, has been involved with the Jewish mafia for 20 years. Starring Martin Landau, Michael Ontkean, Eli Wallach (S) (696339). \*  
12.55 *Tropical Heat*. Nick's wayward father is wrongly accused of murder (R) (S) (9641599).  
1.50 *American Gladiators*. Very much like British *Gladiators*, but with better dental work (Followed by *News Headlines*) (S) (9556082).  
2.40 *El News Review*. Entertainment news from Hollywood (R) (743857).  
3.25 *Night Shift* (R) (S) (46511565).  
3.30 *God's Gift*. Davina McCall and the late-night version of *Man O'War* (Followed by *ITN News Headlines*) (R) (961928).  
4.25 *Colt Vibe* (S) (30198898).  
4.40 *ITV Sports Classics* (92274315).  
5.00 *Coach, Shazam, Part 3* (S) (8797266).  
5.30 *News* (750444). To 6.00am.

## Channel 4

6.00 *Sesame Street* (R) (81730).  
7.00 *The Magic School Bus* (R) (23117).  
7.30 *The Ferals* (S) (33592).  
8.00 *Gaelic Games*. Action from the Leinster Hurling Final when Offaly, 1994 All-Ireland Champions, take on Wexford. Also Down play Antrim in the Ulster Hurling Final (29575).  
9.00 *The Morning Line*. Today's top nags (S) (21846).  
10.00 *High Five*. The Scandinavian superstars of crowd-popping (42010).  
10.30 *The Mountain Bike Tour of Britain* (98846).  
11.00 *Transworld Sport* (11372).  
12.00 *Rawhide*. Anthrax grief (9236204).  
12.55 *Objective, Burma!* (Raoul Walsh 1945 US). Most famous in this country after it was banned for seeming to suggest that Errol Flynn and the Americans won the Burma campaign single-handedly. On its own terms, Walsh's action movie (about an attack on a Japanese radar installation) is taut and involving (35141631). \*  
3.35 *Racing from Newmarket*. Derek Thompson introduces the 3.45 *Primula Maiden Stakes*; the 4.15 *Flood Brokers Animal Health Trust Trophy Stakes* and the 4.45 *Chemist Brokers H'cap Stakes* (S) (1548204). \*  
5.05 *Brookside Omnibus* (S) (8443204). \*  
6.30 *Tour de France*. The penultimate day of the Tour, as riders set off on their individual time trials around the vineyards of Saint Emilion (S) (579).  
7.00 *News and Weather* (603759).  
7.10 *Beyond the Pale*. Joining the Leeds-based audience tonight is Lisa Jardine, Professor of English at Queen Mary/Westfield College, University of London. (514117).  
8.00 *The Heroic Wars*. In the mountainous Shan region of eastern Burma, "Opium King" Khun Sa controls two-thirds of the world's heroin. He and his 15,000-strong guerrilla army have declared independence from Burma, fight major battles with the Burmese army and constantly evade US agents. But in an unexpected twist, his most effective foe turns out to be another warlord, Lo Hsing-Han. Last in a fascinating series (S) (7399).  
9.00 *Dr. Grease* (Anthony Edwards) tries to find a heart donor for Sam Gasner (R) (S) (394117).  
9.55 *Paul Merion: the Second Series* (R) (S) (110730).  
10.25 *Three Colours: Red* (Krzysztof Kieslowski 1994 R/Sw/Fr/Pol). The conclusion of Kieslowski's acclaimed trilogy finds Irene Jacob as a young fashion model who meets an elderly judge, played by Jean-Louis Trintignant, when she returns his dog after injuring it in a car accident. An unlikely relationship develops between them (61346). \*  
12.20 *Homicide - Life on the Street* (R) (S) (226860).  
1.20 *The Twilight Zone*. A boy in modern-day Massachusetts makes telepathic contact with a girl from Puritan England (8234247).  
2.45 *Full Frontal* (2496204).  
3.20 *Dweebz* (S) (8303242). To 3.45am.

## ITV/Regions

**ANGLO**  
As London except 12.30pm *Movies, Games and Videos* (19827). 1.10 *Thunder in Paradise* (2802223). 2.05 *Film: A French Mistress* (768038). 3.55 *Airwolf* (882704). 5.15 *Fine Cartoon Time* (8692952). 5.25 *News* (699252). 5.30 *News* (699252). 5.35 *News* (699252). 5.40 *News* (699252). 5.45 *News* (699252). 5.50 *News* (699252). 5.55 *News* (699252). 6.00 *News* (699252). 6.05 *News* (699252). 6.10 *News* (699252). 6.15 *News* (699252). 6.20 *News* (699252). 6.25 *News* (699252). 6.30 *News* (699252). 6.35 *News* (699252). 6.40 *News* (699252). 6.45 *News* (699252). 6.50 *News* (699252). 6.55 *News* (699252). 7.00 *News* (699252). 7.05 *News* (699252). 7.10 *News* (699252). 7.15 *News* (699252). 7.20 *News* (699252). 7.25 *News* (699252). 7.30 *News* (699252). 7.35 *News* (699252). 7.40 *News* (699252). 7.45 *News* (699252). 7.50 *News* (699252). 7.55 *News* (699252). 8.00 *News* (699252). 8.05 *News* (699252). 8.10 *News* (699252). 8.15 *News* (699252). 8.20 *News* (699252). 8.25 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# If Bob Dole's the best, something's very wrong

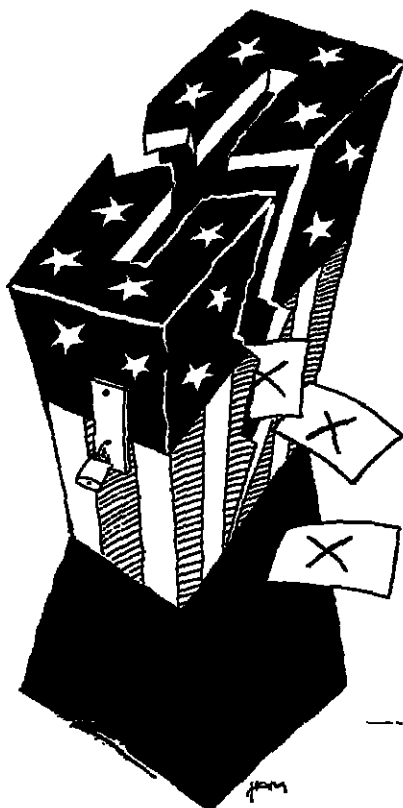
Robert Dole is a good man, a bright man, and even quite a nice man. But he is not going to be President of the United States, and it is about time that the Republican Party – which is preparing to nominate him as its candidate – recognised that fact. The big question is, why did the American political system, much vaunted as the exemplar of pluralist democracy, throw up a candidate who effectively annuls the presidential election campaign and reduces it to either irrelevance (at best) or farce (at worst)?

Mr Dole, a long-time senator and experienced legislator, has never caught the public imagination. He is not a vivacious campaigner, to say the least. He is not a good public speaker, and he has few big ideas. In the past few weeks, his campaign has plumbed new underwhelming depths. His dusted down slogan – "A better Man for a better America" – is leaden. He is between 20 and 25 percentage points behind Bill Clinton in the polls. A series of damaging gaffes have led him to curb his off-the-cuff remarks, making him seem even less interesting. "Humourless group. Don't wanna say anything," he said when he met a group of journalists this week. Worse, many leading Republicans are starting to say in public what they have thought in private for some time: Bob has no wings, not even ones that can be implanted by spin-doctoring force. He won't fly. Some of his party

are even starting to think the unthinkable; that the man who won the primaries should not be the man who is chosen by the Republican Convention in San Diego in August.

Some still believe the next few months can turn everything around. The convention always gives the candidate a kick, and Clinton himself could always be his worst enemy. But it is probably wishful thinking on the Republicans' part to believe that time will solve the problem. It is futile for the right to hope that Whitewater, or the clutch of minor scandals that have accumulated around it, will help to swing the election. Little has emerged to suggest that the Clintons were guilty of any criminal act; most Americans cannot understand the details of these extraordinarily complex affairs. And even those who are clear about what is really at stake are not entirely agreed that it absolutely matters.

Moreover, the Republican Convention risks becoming an occasion to tear the party apart, rather than anoint a leader. There are three strategies open to the Republicans, if they want to reopen the question. The first is the I Can't Believe He's A Republican strategy; in other words, pick someone who is regarded by the public as independent, above partisan politics, beyond the petty Beltway squabbles that so many people detest. Colin Powell, polls suggest, would be the ideal candidate, from the voters' point of view; but Mr Powell has



counted himself out. The second option is the Clear Blue Water strategy. In the same way as the Conservative Party has been invited by its right wing to distance itself from the opposition, the Republicans could strike out into the vast ocean of Gingrichism or Buchananism. Problem: there is little to suggest that this would make much of an inroad into the Clinton lead. Buchanan is regarded as a compelling and lively stump orator, who stirs up audiences and controversy and interest, but cannot command a dominating lead among the broad population. Gingrich's goose is already well and truly spattered with shot.

The third strategy is to find the Real Thing. Find a Republican with a proven track-record in office who has leadership and name recognition. One obvious contender would be James Baker, the former secretary of state, treasury secretary and chief of staff has held virtually every office short of the presidency. But Mr Baker is not a campaigner, he is a classic Washington insider. That is what the Republicans want to get away from.

And therein rests the Republican hopelessness, and, possibly, the pointlessness of the forthcoming campaign. Mr Dole's weakness is really the Republican Party's weakness. The party struggled to find a candidate in the primaries, because none of those who presented themselves commanded any clear majority. It is struggling now, because there is no single

figure around whom the party can unite and who can also command public support.

On one level, since a Clinton victory is not an obviously bad thing, the Republican failure might be viewed as no great tragedy. But the weakness of the Republicans ought to be the source of real concern, inside and outside the US. In the absence of a strong Republican candidate, the election may well take a strange turn. The lure of Ross Perot remains strong, and he could easily emerge as a strong third force in November, just as in 1992. Ross Perot represents an unattractive side of American politics: personalist, xenophobic, authoritarian.

However, even more seriously, the present campaign ought to be provoking Americans into wondering why their political system has proved flatly incapable of mustering a proper contest in 1996. Bill Clinton is not, by any means, a perfect president. It is frankly embarrassing that the American political system cannot conjure up a competitive candidate to challenge him. And the reason it can't is even more embarrassing: the political system in America is, at the federal level, hung up on static immovable issues such as abortion, or is merely an exercise in futile gesturing (vide the Contract with America, and other budget-related sabre-rattlings). Right now, American is showing us that, contrary to its own self-image, it is no great model for democracy. Instead, it is a warning against political sclerosis.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Unconditional respect for life is the basis of a civilised society

Sir: Bryan Appleyard ("Abortion: why we must think again", 18 July) is right: abortion is the issue of the future, not the past. The doublethink involved in condemning infanticide whilst permitting abortion is gruesomely revealed in the description he gives of a "partial birth abortion", which involves killing a baby whilst it is being born.

In 1994 there was controversy over the possible use of ova from aborted fetuses. It is ironic that a foetus can be regarded as human enough to become a biological parent and still be denied the right to be born alive. But the difficulty in identifying any point during gestation when such a right can first be recognised is highlighted by scientific advances which not only constantly push back the age at which prematurely born babies survive, but also the stage (now thought to be well within the first three months) at which a foetus shows signs of being able to feel.

Catholic teaching is that "from the time the ovum is fertilised a life has begun which is neither that of the father nor the mother. It is rather the life of a new human being... it would never be made human if it were not human already". From the first moment of its existence the result of human procreation must be given that unconditional respect which is morally due to the human being.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority has

instructed clinics to begin after 31 July discarding embryos which have been frozen for five years and which are unclaimed or unwanted.

The bizarre prospect of so many surplus embryos being created and then destroyed betrays the moral bankruptcy of our society in denying the intrinsic value of all human life. It is of a piece with the appalling death toll from procured abortions. Bryan Appleyard says there are now 184,000 in this country per year, 98 per cent of them for social reasons.

We need to think again. The first and most fundamental duty of any society is to protect human life, and to have a special regard for the weak and vulnerable. By ignoring this duty, abortion on demand corrodes the foundations of the just society. Many people of all faiths and none sense this. The survival of our common human inheritance depends upon re-establishing the unconditional respect for innocent life as the basis of a civilised society.

BASIL HUMPHREY

Archbishop of Westminster

London SW1

Sir: It is easy to make abortion sound gruesome. The "yuk" factor is the anti-abortionists' best weapon but to use it dishonestly is pointless and unfair.

"Partial birth abortion" is not listed in any medical textbook and the vast majority of doctors in this country are unaware of intact dilatation and evacuation. It is not

routinely used in America, although the pro-lifers' opposition to it has sprung from there. The number of such operations carried out in Britain is unknown simply because they are so rare that they are unrecorded. Enquiries amongst gynaecologists experienced in late abortions show that there must be fewer than a handful performed each year.

More than 90 per cent of abortions take place before 12 weeks, when the foetus is about 5cm long. Despite Fisk's report on foetal sentience (first published two years ago), subsequent reports have made it clear that the brain and nervous system is not developed sufficiently to register pain before about 24 weeks, and even then this is questionable.

Finally, I only wish he was right in claiming we have abortion on demand in Britain – the Abortion Law Reform Association has been campaigning for a woman's right to choose for the past 60 years. The reality is that many women are turned away, delayed or humiliated by their doctor when they request termination of an unwanted pregnancy. In almost all other developed countries around the world abortion is allowed simply on the grounds of the woman's distress, but in Britain it is still not guaranteed in law or in practice.

JANE ROE  
Campaign Manager  
Abortion Law Reform Association  
London W1

Sir: Bryan Appleyard's is a curiously emotive piece, while seeming at the same time devoid of any feeling or understanding towards the women who choose to have abortions.

He uses inflammatory language to describe suction termination – but suction termination takes place up to 12 weeks, a stage when the "pieces" of a foetus are not identifiable; and research indicates that foetal pain is not experienced before 13 weeks. The pain that is experienced, however, is the pain of a mother who for "social reasons" – the same social reasons that produce bigots, men who sit in judgement on women, family breakdown, and desperation in some pregnant women – decides to abort a baby she may be deeply attached to, but decides not to keep.

Whether abortion happens as a result of increasing scientific intervention, or for social reasons, the discussion surrounding it must be carried out in a climate of empathy for the mother making her choice, not against a background of stigma and judgement. As a man, Bryan Appleyard is in the fortunate position of never having to make this agonising choice. As such, perhaps he should also be prepared to concede that his arguments will always be coloured by a certain lack of understanding.

HELEN BAILEY  
London SW16

### Seeking ways to end Tube strike

Sir: In reference to your news story (19 July), I would like to make it clear that the Labour Party has no plans to introduce compulsory binding arbitration for all public service disputes.

On Wednesday, I answered a question about the Tube strike in London and the very specific issues of hours and holidays at the centre of that dispute. Labour's call for arbitration is not "backing the bosses" but recognising that in this instance, there is a better way of resolving a dispute which is making it near impossible for hundreds of thousands of Londoners to get to work – not least those who do not have cars or cannot afford taxis.

The days have long gone when simplistic knee-jerk reactions are either appropriate or acceptable. But there should be no mistake in anyone's mind that the Labour Party will support, as it always has, those who are seeking fair redress for unfair treatment.

The Independent would be the first to criticise Labour if we assumed that on every occasion support for strike action was appropriate, or that there was only one way of resolving a dispute – especially where the central point of the dispute is about interpretations over whether a particular agreement has been breached.

DAVID BLUNKETT MP  
(Sheffield Brightside, Lab)  
House of Commons  
London SW1

The writer is Shadow Secretary for Education and Employment

### Labour's positive stance on arts

Sir: It is frankly absurd for Andrew Marr to maintain either that the Labour Party doesn't take cultural policies seriously, or that "everyone involved in the arts" doubts Labour's commitment (Comment, 17 July).

New Labour's Road to the Manifesto identifies the economic significance of the arts, as well as their "enormous impact on education, leisure and the quality of life". They are, it says, "significant earners for Britain" and employ hundreds of thousands. This positive stance is welcomed by almost everyone I know who has any sense of ambition for Britain's cultural future.

A foretaste of the likely economic and cultural benefits such a commitment would bring can be seen in Glasgow, Birmingham, Sheffield, Newcastle and the string of other Labour-run cities where effective cultural policies have been pursued for many years. In a recent debate on the future of London, Tony Blair spoke extensively and passionately about the need for quality in both the built environment and the natural environment of our capital city. He is right, and hopefully he will be given the opportunity to prove it.

Sir DAVID PUTTNAM  
Ivor, Buckinghamshire

Sir: Andrew Marr's article happened to be published the day after I had sat for more than an hour on the terrace at the House of Commons with Mark Fisher, who is finalising the party's cultural policy for the next manifesto. I confidently predict that, when the policy is published, he will be as excited and thrilled as I was by its freshness and innovation. Mark's boss, Jack Cunningham, is equally enthusiastic about the arts, as I know from many joint visits to the theatre and the opera, and long discussions about books and music.

KEN FOLLETT  
London SW10

## LETTER from THE EDITOR

As readers occasionally remind me, I am still on a learning curve as an editor. One of the things I am learning is that journalism is not all about telling people new facts, or even saying interesting things about the facts. Sometimes there isn't much to say or add, but you say and add it anyway – and everyone would be outraged if you didn't. I'm thinking, this week, of the TWA disaster.

Like many other such stories, this one can be summarised with brutal speed: a plane blew up and hundreds of people died. Their relatives and close friends feel different things but things journalism never really penetrates. As to commentary, well, we don't know why it happened. Until we do, it doesn't "mean" anything. For those of us untouched by it, this event will not change our lives in any way.

So one could deal fairly with the disaster, noting the essentials, in a short paragraph of prose. In all the pages devoted to it, I learnt nothing surprising. The pictures of relatives' collapsing faces remind one of life's fragility; maybe one is a little kinder for a few hours as a result. But the deluge of comment is, logically, redundant.

Yet I worked my way through all the stories, looked at the pictures, and trawled the press searching for meaningless details – and so did millions of other people. In these circumstances, journalism becomes a strange sort of secular rite, something we use to deal with the world's danger and strangeness. We devote pages to these incidents not only to convey information but because, in some strange way, it would be indecent not to.

One story that has provoked letters and much debate in the office, too, is the attack by the children's author Philip Pullman on modern novels that downplay a good story in order to flaunt stylistic flash. The consensus is firmly pro-Pullman. Modernism is an excellent thing – the world would be much poorer without Joyce and Proust – but it is an old thing, a been-there, done-that thing. And it is simply true that

the quality of children's books is, in many cases, higher than the quality of adult fiction. Children, at any rate, mine, are tougher and less glibly critics. If I had the space and nerve, I'd probably tuck a few Henry Treece and Alan Gardfield into the holiday suitcase.

As is apparent from today's proper letters (see left), I am being roundly chastised by Labour-supporting artistic folk for my suggestion earlier in the week that new Labour was insufficiently serious about the arts, architecture and environment. In backspin, anyone who supports Labour and has ever watched BBC2 is now

Neither David Puttnam nor Ken Follett could be described as luvvies. I hereby demand trial by proper luvvies

sneeringly referred to as a "Labour luvvy". But neither David Puttnam, an eminent film-maker, nor Ken Follett, who makes real money writing real stories, could properly be described as luvvies. So I take their criticism seriously, without, in the end, being convinced by them. Instead, I hereby demand trial by proper luvvies. Then, if found guilty of underestimating Jack Cunningham's feel for culture, or Frank Dobson's environmentalism, I will be taken out and beaten severely round the head with lightly-oiled pieces of focaccia.

The in-house *chutzpah* award goes this week to David McKittick, our Northern Ireland correspondent, whose application for a pass to the Sinn Féin and *féin*, or conference, has caused some bemusement in the party. It apparently included, alongside his name, telephone number and so on, the following postal description of this office: "Canary Wharf... You know where that is."

Andrew Marr

### QUOTE UNQUOTE

Jackie Onassis would have laughed at £15m. She could have spent that for breakfast – Harold Brooks-Baker, editor of *Burke's Peerage*, on the reported divorce settlement for the Princess of Wales. I really don't mind what you're called. You're Mummy – Prince William's reported response when his mother raised the possibility of her losing the title HRH.

What happens in Northern Ireland is not acceptable. If it happened in Surrey or Somerset or Sussex we would not tolerate it. Well, I am not prepared to tolerate it in Northern Ireland so we will try and try again to get the settlement we need – John Major.

The law is arcane, slow, monopolistic and riddled with restrictive practices calculated to multiply fees. It cries out for reform. – Austin Mitchell, Labour MP, calling for the nationalisation of the legal profession.

The greatest compliment that could be paid to any politician is that he puts his family first, his religion second, his political beliefs and country third and his party a very distant fourth – Edward Leigh, Conservative MP.

Much has been made of Westminster as a hothouse of lust and intrigue. But for every one MP falling foul of the charms of a pretty secretary, there are two businessmen doing the same – Christine Hamilton, wife and secretary of Neil Hamilton, Conservative MP. No system of higher education that is not elitist is worthy of the name – Lord Beloff, Conservative peer.



Lord Moynihan with bunny girls in 1966 (left to right): Melissa, Erin, Lee and Anita. Rex Features

### Great days for Moynihan and the Playboy Bunnies

Sir: Are you all so young at the Independent that the Fifties and the Sixties are the same (photograph of the late Baron Moynihan surrounded by Playboy Bunnies, 16 July)? Is there no one old enough to have gone to the Playboy Club on Park Lane? How sad. Tell your exactly when it was – the later months of 1966.

Left to right: Melissa, whom I remember only after seeing her

photograph; Erin, who used to greet customers or take photographs, and who I heard became Bunny Mother after the original one, Donna – famous for her electric green contact lenses, which were even greener than mine – left; the Moynihan person (no memory of him at all, but that means nothing); Lee, an American girl, who arrived at the club some time in September, hoping to break into films – no idea

whether she did; and, I think, Anita, who came from Northern Ireland.

One last thing: under those bosomy curves lies an ardent packer of Kleenex and old tights. There was only one girl who could manage without that help in all the 100-odd girls there.

Great days.  
LIZ FLOWER  
Shipston-on-Stour,  
Warwickshire

### Pigeon fanciers

Sir: Further to your article regarding "Pigeons in the Post" ("Pigeon publicity stunt ruffles welfare groups", 18 July), I seem to remember that the idea was also tried in the early years of the Sixties.

In that instance the advertiser received a telegram back from the recipient: "Pigeon delicious – please send others".  
ROBIN OLLINGTON  
London SW16

### Love me, love my suspension

Sir: Your article ("Forget the sex, it's the Wax factor that sells the car to women", 17 July) states that women don't like the car advertisement showing sex on the bonnet, because it is a male fantasy.

You are wrong. It is a female fantasy – and the reason women

dislike the advert is because they are aware that no man could ever make mad, passionate love on his car without worrying about a) the wretched paintwork, or b) the suspension.

SHARON KENDRICK  
Weybridge,  
Surrey

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.



In which a porky Yorkshireman and his pal take on the dashing socialite for being a snob. Whoever wins, it makes exciting spectator sport, writes **David Aaronovitch**

Wood panelled to head height, the room then gave way to stone. On

**Imran and Jemima, Ian 'n' Kath:**

By the time we had absorbed our surroundings we were all in a high good humour, looking forward to an enjoyable and entertaining afternoon. After all, we were not paying for this. And nor was the judge, Mr Justice French. With his tight mouth and small eyes, he looks like a hang-

The last group of people who are having terrific fun are those who stand to benefit from it most. I refer, of course, to the real superstars: QCs George Carman and Charles Gray, counsels respectively for Imran and the Botham/Lamb combo. Carman is short, silver-haired, beak-nosed and with fabulous deep eyes. Gray

Which takes us to the front bench, where sit those for whom this is neither big joke nor certain money-spinner. On the judge's left are Imran and Jemima, all Knights-bridge and nightclubs. He wears dark double-breasted suits, which hang from his superb figure. A cross between Barbra Streisand and Fergie, she looks impossibly young, and wears perpetually the slightly lost and appealing expression that the daughters of rich and powerful men use when charming things out of Daddy.

Finally come Lamby (as Botham

So all last week George Carman sought, through cross-examination,

and an equally proud man," replied Botham. "Pride for one of them, of course, goeth before a fall."

unearth bad neighbours who are black, white, male, female, married, single, poor and rich. That a Tory MP chooses to publicise this case with all the ingredients to delight right-wing Tories, shows the pathetic lengths to which they will go to demonise sections of the population they don't care for. Let's start a fund to pay for this woman to move next door to the MP in question. Then she'd have some idea of what he means about the neighbour from hell.



# Not a bunch of spies, just a devout religious people

The Baha'is believe in 'the oneness of mankind' and the validity of all faiths. Nicholas Bethell explains why Iran persecutes them nonetheless

"They are not a religion," said the Iranian official angrily. "They are an international spy organisation. They were started by Britain to maintain British control over Iran. Now they are run by the Americans and the Israelis. Under the Shah they were a privileged group and they served in the secret police."

I was in Iran with two former European Parliament colleagues, Bryan Cassidy and Edward McMillan Scott, and we were talking about the Baha'i community. This is the most disliked and persecuted group in Iran. No one in the Islamic administration has a good word to say about them. Article 13 of the constitution admits the rights of the Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities, but the Baha'is are not mentioned, either in the constitution or, more importantly, in the Koran. They therefore should not exist.

They get no help from the legal minority groups. At a meeting we had with the members of the Iranian parliament who represent these groups, the Christians and Jews were against giving the Baha'is any rights at all.

In the aftermath of the Islamic revolution, in 1980, 212 Baha'is were executed on charges of treason, murder, espionage and theft. They were accused of making war on God and of corrupting the earth. Thousands were arrested. Thousands left the country or fled across its borders. Of the 6,500 Baha'is in Britain, 3,000 are refugees from Iran.

Near Tehran I met three of the leaders of the Baha'i faith in Iran. They were running a risk, they told us, in even meeting foreigners, let alone complaining to us about their problems. And the picture they painted was indeed a dismal one. They told us that the cruder acts of persecution are less than they were in the immediate post-revolution years. No Baha'i has been executed these past four years. Only eight are now in prison. But a whole range of subtler restrictions and punishments has been built up around the 300,000-strong community, with the clear



A Baha'i meeting in New York in the 1880s, thousands were killed in Iran. Harassment is still institutionalised Renato Rotolo/Liaison/FSP

aim of undermining its very existence in the long term and rendering it impotent meanwhile.

The Baha'i places of worship have all been confiscated, including many cemeteries. Baha'is may worship only on private premises, in groups of 15 or less. Baha'is cannot receive higher education or enter the government service. Even private employers are discouraged from taking them on and are harassed if they do accept them. Recently the head of the Iranian judiciary, Ayatollah Yazdi, announced that the Baha'is are an international espionage group. Iranian officials heard the judgement and are acting on it.

The Baha'is, who used to be a highly educated community, now take manual or low-paid clerical jobs, and they have the added financial burden of having to support the large number of their co-religionists who are unemployed and destitute. Their private property is constantly at risk. It is treated virtually as fair game, since Islamic courts will seldom find in favour of a Baha'i litigant.

Passports are granted to Baha'is only with great difficulty and after heavy and humiliating questioning. Baha'i marriages are often not recognised by the state, which in theory leaves

the couple liable to be charged with the serious Islamic crime of adultery. In practice, it means that they do not receive the social benefits of a married couple, and the inheritance rights of their children are not easily proved. Baha'is do military service, but they are never promoted beyond the lowest ranks.

They are no longer being physically exterminated, but normal life is being made impossible for them. They are being starved economically and it is hard for them to practise their faith. They are treated as alien and treacherous people, and their faith is seen as an insult to Islam. Many have left the country. Others would do so if they could get passports. However, the three Baha'is I met made it clear that most of all they would like to live on, normally and without persecution, in Iran, the land of their birth.

Why does the Islamic Republic hate them so much? The prophet of their faith, Baha'ullah, came from Nur in Iran 150 years ago to put forward a religion that accepts the validity of all past religions, Islam included. However, since he was brought up as a Muslim, he is deemed by the strict followers of Islam to have deserted the

faith. The founder of Baha'ism is therefore, they say, guilty of apostasy. And so, some claim, are his followers today. And apostasy is punishable by death. Nor does it help, in Iran's frenetic political climate, that the headquarters of the faith is in Haifa, Israel.

Baha'ism proclaims "the oneness of mankind" and rejects all political movements that divide the human race. It is opposed, for instance, to national frontiers and to political parties. But it asks its followers to obey the law and to pay taxes.

It is difficult to see anything harmful in the precepts of such a quiet faith, but the Iranian authorities of the mid-1800s treated its followers abominably, killing tens of thousands. There are today six million Baha'is in the world, spread over 176 countries, including one million in India and 130,000 in the United States. It is only in Iran, apparently, that they are seen as a danger to society and treated accordingly.

The mistreatment of the Baha'i community is the darkest feature of an already dark picture of Iranian persecution of groups it does not like. I hope that the three gentle Baha'is I met will live to see better days.

DAVID AARONOVITCH

Scratch 'n sniff this



When I told my friend Tom that the magazine *Country Living* had four pages of its latest edition impregnated with the smell of Gordon's gin, his townie response was to wonder whether any of its readers would notice. Were not large numbers of them likely to be pretty steady and constant consumers of the product already? He could only think of one gesture more redundant, and that would have been to attach a pair of free green wellington boots to the front cover.

My worry was rather different. It often occurs in literature that country houses – among their other inhabitants – contain at least one former alcoholic who is drying out. This pathetic soak is denied the keys to the drinks cupboard and all the local hostilities have been instructed not to serve him. Imagine the horror of his family when, returning home from the gymkhana, they find the poor lush boiling up copies of *Country Living* in a saucepan, or lying in a stupor on the drawing room floor, his mouth stuffed full of a profile of Petronella Wyatt. What a way to go.

The be-ginned magazine is, of course, an inevitable latest stage in a process that has been going on since I was a child. Then the comics used to compete for my custom by Sellotaping a piece of toffee to their covers. Today CDs, computer games, and free sex guides are the most oft-used attachments. Condoms adorn certain youth publications, while (confusingly for busy parents) coloured balloons attract kids to *Rosie And Jim*.

This is familiar, and not unpleasant, for the reader. But I believe that there is something rather less benign about the Gordon's approach. In the first place the increasing use of one sense (the olfactory) to ensnare those who are essentially using another, is sneaky and underhand – reminiscent of those banned techniques for subliminal advertising. Had they known about it, the North Koreans would have used smells like "Main Street USA" to bend the minds of POWs.

It is my view, as a columnist of no little substance and weight, that we writers are

ourselves threatened by this development. Already those who toil at their word-processors in the service of women's magazines have to compete with pages exuding fabulous perfumes. How can you expect to hold a reader's attention on "five things you never knew about premature ejaculation" when the marvellous pong of "Passion" is overlaid?

And the Gordon's promotion shows that things will get worse. Silk Cut ads will release nicotine into your face, the odour of hot exhaust and the sound of revving engines will accompany the latest Peugeot puff. The distractions from the editorial content of mag-

The fulminations of Mr Paul Johnson could be accompanied by a whiff of sulphur

azines and journals will grow. So here is my proposal. Based upon the cowardly principle of "if you can't beat 'em", it is to press small into the service of writers themselves. The fulminations of moral majoritarians such as Mr Paul Johnson could be accompanied by a whiff of sulphur. Defence correspondents could nominate a favourite chemical weapon to permeate their pieces. The not unpleasant odour of dusty libraries could emerge from the columns of elder statesmen.

Indeed, whole publications could be distinguished by more than the colour of their paper or the vividness of their cover photography. *Gardening World* would greet with the rich stink of a good mulch. *Angling Times*' chubb would take on *Fishermen's Monthly*'s bass. Let us draw a veil over how this idea might be handled by the mags on the top shelf, but newspapers could do it, too. The *Guardian's* "essence of staffroom" (mingled mung-bean on soda bread and self-righteousness) would compete with the *Independent's* own "languidly intelligent person after a good work-out" (light sweat and yoghurt). Mmm. Smells good.



Stars of stage, but not screens: (from left) Julie Andrews in 'My Fair Lady' and Audrey Hepburn in the film version; Jane Horrocks in 'Little Voice' and Gwyneth Paltrow, chosen for the film

## Sorry, lady, you just ain't the part

In Hollywood, the bankable movie star will always oust the acclaimed stage actress, says David Lister

What, Jane Horrocks must be wondering this morning, has Gwyneth Paltrow got that I haven't got? To which the answer is bankability, proven success in Hollywood movies, a face in every glossy magazine and a boyfriend called Brad Pitt, which doesn't exactly harm.

But, Miss Horrocks might whisper into her pillow, I'm a better actress and she's been given a part I was promised and which I created to critical acclaim on the London stage. To which the answer is, "All true. But you're not the first, and you won't be the last."

But she might by now yell at the wall in her broadest Lancashire accent, "It's just not fair." To which the answer is no and yes.

Though originally promised by the American film company Miramax that she would be able to repeat her London stage triumph in *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* as the working class Lancashire girl who could mimic Marilyn Monroe and Judy Garland, Miramax is now reported to be favouring the ethereal Miss Paltrow to star, as she did in the thriller *Seven*, opposite Brad Pitt. British connections are still confident Miss Horrocks will land the part. But if she does not, she will merely be the latest in a line of British actresses ditched by American film producers for bankable Hollywood stars and starlets.

Back in the Sixties, Hollywood ignored Julie Andrews' stage triumph in *My Fair Lady* to give Audrey Hepburn the part. It was a musical and Miss Hepburn couldn't sing, so she mimed, but she didn't harm the box office. The film was a smash hit because Miss Hepburn was a star and Miss Andrews (then) wasn't. But British pluck has its revenge. Julie went off and did a profitable little number called *The Sound of Music*. There are more recent examples of British

virtue going unrewarded. Juliet Stevenson was devastated when her stage role as a torture victim in the play *Death and the Maiden* went to Sigourney Weaver when it was turned into a movie. To add insult to injury, American Equity endorsed blocking an English actress having the role, even though no one objected when the all-American John Malkovich played opposite Miss Stevenson in another London stage production.

Helen Mirren's policewoman Jane Tennison

De Niro starred in an adaptation of Pat Barker's *Union Street*, a tale originally of Northern life on the dole. It wasn't even funny. At least Dick Van Dyke's cockney accent in *Mary Poppins* had cult value.

The Hollywoodisation of British scripts was brilliantly satirised in *The Comic Strip's Strike* on Channel 4 a few years ago. American producers swooped on a Welsh mining village to make a film about Arthur Scargill and the min-

We seem to forget that our film stars are just as capable of taking the bread and butter out of American actors' mouths

in *Prime Suspect* will be a sun-kissed Californian with an American accent when Lynda La Plante's drama is made into a Hollywood movie.

And Miss Horrocks herself will not be repeating her role of the dim secretary Bubble in *Absolutely Fabulous* when that is shown on American TV. Roseanne Barr has bought the rights to put it on in America and it will have an all-American cast with Madonna's chum Sandra Bernhard a candidate to play Jennifer Saunders' Edina.

It is easy to scoff at the Americanisation of British art. Nothing jars so much as a tanned American superstar bringing a Californian drawl to a tale of British working-class life. It reached its nadir when Jane Fonda and Robert

De Niro starred in an adaptation of Pat Barker's *Union Street*, a tale originally of Northern life on the dole. It wasn't even funny. At least Dick Van Dyke's cockney accent in *Mary Poppins* had cult value.

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ers' strike. Al Pacino was to play Scargill and Meryl Streep his inamorata. To give it a happy ending for the folks back in the Mid-west, Scargill won the strike, and, in the words of the producer, "got the girl".

Ironically Meryl Streep is actually being lined up as a candidate to play Paltrow/Horrocks's mother in *Little Voice*, a part created on the British stage by Alison Steadman.

But crime as we might, there is a logic to the American approach. The first and most obvious aspect is financial. American movies are global projects and need globally recognised names to draw in audiences.

There is artistic validity too. We can be mightily inconsistent in defence of British purity. Why should it be ridiculous for Meryl Streep to play

a Lancashire mum, but inspired casting for her to play a Polish concentration camp inmate in *Sophie's Choice*? Good actors are good actors. American can play British just as British can play American.

The Americans, with their appreciation of market forces, don't seem to dispute this. They did not take to the barricades over Ken Branagh from Belfast playing a Los Angeles private eye and Emma Thompson from north London his lady in *Dead Again*. The pair were stars; they had earned their right to play who they liked, and that was that.

We do seem quietly to forget that our film stars are just as capable of taking the bread and butter out of American actors' mouths. Hannibal Lecter in *The Silence of the Lambs* was most definitely not a Welshman, though Sir Anthony Hopkins, who won an Oscar for portraying him, most definitely is.

Where there does seem an element of injustice is in a situation where an actor or actress has created a part and made it their own. This was certainly the case with Jane Horrocks in *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* and indeed with Juliet Stevenson in *Death and the Maiden*. Stevenson lost out to Hollywood fears of audiences simply not recognising her. Horrocks, I suspect, may yet win over American doubters.

But if she doesn't, she could still have the last laugh. In *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, the actress playing the lead not only has to imitate Marilyn Monroe and Judy Garland, which Gwyneth Paltrow will be able to have a jolly good stab at; she also has to do a spot-on impersonation of Cilla Black. When she discovers that in the script Miss Paltrow might give Brad Pitt a peck on the cheek, make her apologies and seek alternative employment.

## "Free Tibet!"

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Free Tibet Campaign (formerly Tibet Support Group UK) stands for the Tibetans' right to decide their own future. It is independent of all governments and is funded by its members and supporters.

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Payable to 'Free Tibet Campaign'  
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9 Islington Green, London N1 2XH

FreeTibet CAMPAIGN





# Threat to 2,500 jobs as Parsons goes on sale

CHRIS GODSMARK  
Business Correspondent

Doubt was cast yesterday on the chances of saving 2,500 engineering jobs on Tyneside and in Derby, as Rolls-Royce put a for-sale sign over Parsons Power Generation. The decision, which came as a surprise to workers and union officials, will cost the company £248m—significantly more than the £175m taxable profit the whole of the Rolls-Royce group made last year.

Rolls-Royce's recently appointed chief executive, John Rose, blamed the move on intense international competition. "Parsons is a very small player in steam-power generation with less than 1 per cent of the market... we didn't see a way of it making a material contribution."

Mr Rose gave Rolls-Royce until Christmas to find a buyer for the two factories. But one City analyst, who didn't want to be named, said: "It's going to be very tricky to sell. To be honest, I just don't think it will find a buyer."

Parsons Power Generation Systems, which makes steam turbines for larger power stations, employs 1,600 people at the site it has occupied in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne for more than a century. The workforce has steadily declined since the 1960s when the company had more than 12,000 staff. In 1985 Parsons employed 5,300 people. Some 900 of the 2,500 jobs that are now under threat are at Rolls-Royce International Combustion in Derby.

Unions condemned the sell-off. According to Barney McGill from the AEEU, Parsons had until recently been taking on temporary staff to finish contracts. He said: "The news was heard quietly by the workforce. Everyone is shocked and devastated."

The two companies lost £30m last year on a combined turnover of £280m. This represents 25 per cent of the sales of Rolls-Royce Industrial Power, the half of the company which has increasingly been overshadowed in recent years by the higher profile aerospace division.

It is the biggest strategic decision so far taken by Mr Rose since he became chief executive in May. His predecessor, Sir Terence Harrison, who spent much of his working life in the power generation industry with Northern Engineering Industries (NEI), which Rolls-Royce acquired in 1989, was last night unavailable for comment.

Analysts expressed surprise at the scale of the £248m write-off which will hit the results for the half-year to the end of June. Some £78m of this relates to goodwill from the £304m takeover of NEI in 1989. In addition, £70m will pay for the possible closure of the two factories, of which £35m represents redundancy costs, should they arise. A further £100m covers the costs of finishing existing contracts.



End of an era: Engine makers at Parsons (left) gained a world-wide reputation for Newcastle. They produced the astonishing 2,000-horse power launch the 'Turbina' (top right). Yesterday grim-faced workers (bottom right) outside the engine generator's North-east offices reflect on their fate

Chris Avery from Paribas Capital Markets. "Inevitably, productivity will suffer as staff try to make the work last longer, but it also suggests several contacts have gone sour."

Next year Parsons will complete a £450m order for a gas-fired power station in Andrapradesh, India. But two larger Indian coal-fired contracts have not materialised. The power generation business has become increasingly

global as guaranteed large-scale supply contracts with the UK electricity industry dried up after privatisation. In the switch to gas-fired generation, contracts have tended to go to bigger players, including Siemens,

ABB of Sweden, General Electric of the US and Mitsubishi. Babcock led the way last autumn by selling its 100-year-old boiler-making factory in Glasgow to Mitsui of Japan for £56m.

Rolls-Royce, was keen to stress the chances of selling the two plants. This could take the form of joint venture where it would retain a minority stake, or a deal to continue supplying research and development know-how to the purchaser.

In its statement the company pledged to concentrate on smaller power generation equipment of up to 150 megawatts based on gas turbines. These use aerospace technology such as the Trent engine, which is being used to heat and power other Rolls-Royce sites in Derby in a joint venture with National Power.

Asked about two business put up for sale, Mr Rose explained: "International Combustion has over time been quite profitable and it's very saleable." But he admitted the chances of selling Parsons were less good.

The decision casts doubt on Rolls-Royce's 15-year alliance to share expertise in power generation with Westinghouse, which began with high hopes in 1992. Westinghouse has long-standing partnerships with Mitsubishi and Fiat.

The announcement appeared to have caught Westinghouse by surprise. Reg McIntyre, a director involved with the relationship, first knew of it by reading a faxed press release. He said: "We weren't aware of this... it is a surprise." Rolls-Royce shares ended the day up 2.5p, to 227p.

Comment, page 19

## The company that transformed steam into power

The Parsons turbine works is not quite the potent symbol of traditional North-eastern industrial history that the Swan Hunter shipbuilding yard and the vanished coal mines represented.

But the long established business is every bit as important a part of the engineering tradition of the North-east as the better known shipyard. If a buyer is not found, Parsons' disappearance could have a greater impact on the local economy than Swan's decline over the last 15 years from a substantial shipbuilder to a small repair and conversion yard.

Keith Burge, of Economic Research Services, a Newcastle consultancy, said Parsons has a much broader base in the North-east than Swan Hunter, when it was building ships, because it used dozens and perhaps hundreds of local suppliers. "The ramifications of its disappearance would be dreadful."

Parsons turbines supplied the 'Titanic' and transformed Newcastle into a world force in marine and power engineering, writes Peter Rodgers

It would probably be worse than Swan Hunter," he said.

In contrast to Parsons, Swan Hunter did not source a large proportion of its supplies locally. Most of the yard's big spending was on sophisticated electronics made elsewhere in the country for the warships it built, according to studies done by ERS a few years ago.

And although Parsons is not a nationally known name to conjure with, except among engineers and visitors to Newcastle's museum of science and engineering, Mr Burge saw the company, with its history of great engineers and of technical innovation, as "every bit as important in the local consciousness as Swan Hunter."

Parsons was founded by Sir Charles Parsons, whose great achievement was to be the first engineer to turn the steam turbine, a device first built by Hero of Alexandria AD130 and attempted by many engineers in the 18th and 19th centuries, into an industrial machine. A hundred years before, James Watt had poured scorn on the practicalities of a turbine.

All Sir Charles' predecessors had been defeated by the attempt to tame steam escaping from a nozzle at 1,500 mph, the rate at which turbines became efficient. Sir Charles overcame this by splitting the blast of steam as it went through the machine.

was intended for generating electricity, and Parsons became one of the main suppliers of turbines for power stations, which is now its main business. But it also revolutionised naval warfare and large-ship propulsion. Parsons turbines powered Swan's ships.

This began when the 2,000 horsepower prototype launch *Turbina*, using Sir Charles' steam turbine, astonished sceptical naval officers by weaving through the lines of warships at Queen Victoria's 1897 Royal Naval Spithead review at a then unbelievable 34.5 knots (nearly 40mph). It was giving a spectacular — and unauthorised — demonstration of the

abilities of the steam turbine. A dozen years later, the *Titanic*'s vast engine room included a Parsons turbine alongside more conventional units.

After a £12.5m restoration, the *Turbina*, which made Newcastle a world force in marine and power engineering, is on public display again at a new exhibition hall at the City's Discovery Museum.

The North still has a higher concentration of manufacturing than most other regions. But the jobs profile has been changing fast, boosted by inward investment such as the £11m Siemens plant in Newcastle.

Northern Development, which promotes inward investment, says 36,000 jobs have been created by overseas investment since 1985. But such figures disguise a strong trend away from full-time manufacturing jobs to part-time female service employment.

## British Bus chiefs charged in £1.2m company bribery scandal

NIC CICUTTI

Dawson Williams, the colourful boss of British Bus, the UK's largest privately owned bus company, was yesterday charged with eight counts of alleged bribery or attempted bribery of a bank official, involving up to £1.2m, with the aim of obtaining favours for his company.

Mr Williams, who resigned as chairman of British Bus immediately after being charged yesterday, is accused of agreeing a series of interest free loans to Ian Harvey, an official with First National Bank of Boston.

Mr Harvey is charged with agreeing to accept the loans from his co-accused, "as an inducement or reward" for acting on behalf of British Bus or several subsidiaries in which Mr Williams has an interest.

The offences are mostly alleged to have taken place between January 1992 and the end of 1994.

The two men, who were arrested at 8am yesterday, appeared at a brief hearing before City magistrates before being released on bail.

The charges follow a lengthy investigation into the bribery allegations by the Serious Fraud Office.

British Bus, formed in 1992, is currently in the process of being acquired by the Cowie Group, the motor dealer, for a total of £97m, after debts are stripped out.

Cowie said yesterday that the deal was still expected to go ahead shortly after a rights issue, due to close at the end of next week, to help fund the purchase.

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A statement by Cowie yesterday said: "Details of the acquisition of British Bus by Cowie were set out in a circular to shareholders in June."

"These included reference to the fact that the SFO had served notices on certain of the current and former directors of British Bus requiring them to provide information and documents to the SFO."

It added: "The acquisition agreement provides for the resignation of Dawson Williams from the board of British Bus on completion of the acquisition and in the circumstances [he] has resigned from the board of the company."

"In addition, under the terms of the agreement, Cowie has received indemnities relating to the SFO's investigation."

A spokesman for Cowie said he was not able to give specific details of the indemnity agreed with Mr Dawson.

British Bus was valued last year at more than £250m and had retained Hambros as advisers to help with a planned flotation.

The company was also considered likely to tender for parts of British Rail, but despite passing the pre-tender stage decided not to proceed further, partly because of the costs involved in tendering for the contracts.

The company was also part of a consortium that wanted to bid for BR's loss-making Red Star parcels division and was the preferred bidder. But those plans collapsed after the consortium was unable to complete the deal within the agreed timetable.

Throughout this time, the company's lead bank, heading a syndicate which was owed more than £100m by British Bus, has been First National Bank of Boston. Mr Harvey — until his resignation last year — worked as the bank's "link man" with British Bus.

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## Angry paying names threaten legal action

PETER RODGERS  
Financial Editor

An angry group of Lloyd's names is on the point of taking the market to a judicial review if they do not win an improvement in the £3.2bn rescue offer.

Solicitors representing the Paying Names Action Group wrote on Wednesday to Ron Sandler, chief executive of Lloyd's, setting out their objections to the deal and demanding a reply within seven days.

The paying names believe they are unfairly treated because the Lloyd's plan gives more recompense to members who have refused to pay their debts than to those who paid up on time.

In one notorious case, identical twins with identical investments in the market found that one brother is due to pay twice as much as the other. The one with the higher bill had paid

his losses at Lloyd's and the other had held out.

Tony Welford, chairman of the action group, said he had 3,000 members, they had "deep pockets" and if Lloyd's refused to negotiate over a fair deal "we will go ahead with our legal action."

Mr Welford said it was "strongly arguable that Lloyd's has misused its powers in relation to reconstruction and renewal. Litigation will be very regrettable. However, we are determined and I hope Lloyd's will give us an alternative."

The action group wants Lloyd's to agree greater parity between names who have paid and those who have not. The counsel advising the group, Richard Field, QC, has advised that it has a case to ask for a judicial review.

On Monday, Lloyd's won a resounding vote in favour of the first steps towards the rescue.

STOCK MARKETS				
Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High
FTSE 100	3710.50	+17.10	+0.5	3857.10
Dow Jones	4350.00	+24.80	+0.6	4568.60
Nikkei	1960.80	+9.00	+0.5	1945.40
FTSE 250	2106.65	+11.15	+0.5	2244.38
FTSE 350	1841.45	+9.04	+0.5	1924.17
FT All Share	5429.04	+35.14	+0.6	5778.00
New York	21476.29	-30.13	-0.1	22666.80
Hong Kong	10945.30	+134.06	+1.3	11594.99
Frankfurt	2520.19	+13.97	+0.6	2583.49

INTEREST RATES				
Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond	10% US Treasury	10% US Treasury
UK	5.69	6.00	7.89	8.33
US	5.29	5.92	6.75	8.54
Japan	0.53	1.25	3.38	2.88
Germany	3.28	3.38	6.40	6.87

BOND YIELDS				
Index	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Bond (%)	Long Bond (%)
UK	1.10	5.69	7.89	8.33
US	1.10	5.29	6.75	8.54
Japan	0.53	1.25	3.38	2.88
Germany	3.28	3.38	6.40	6.87

CURRENCIES				
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	DM/\$	¥/\$
1.57	2.38	167.47	0.6482	167.47
1.56	2.37	167.47	0.6482	167.47
1.55	2.36	167.47	0.6482	167.47
1.54	2.35	167.47	0.6482	167.47
1.53	2.34	167.47	0.6482	167.47

OTHER INDICATORS				
Index	Yesterday	Day's change	Year Ago	Next Day
Oil Brent	19.38	-0.12	15.70	19.38
Gold	384.35	+0.65	385.90	384.35
Gold E	248.38	+0.12	242.65	248.38

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# Great past may not keep Tyneside steaming on

## COMMENT

'Rolls is optimistic that a buyer or majority partner can be found, perhaps in a developing country. But who will be interested in a company without much of an order book competing in a market which in any case suffers from chronic overcapacity?'

A glorious past has not proved enough to guarantee the future of Parsons, even under the protective umbrella of Rolls-Royce. The company may have invented the steam turbine and its founder Sir Charles Parsons may have revolutionised electricity generation and naval warfare but history might not be enough to save it.

Parsons serves as an ideal paradigm of Britain's wider industrial decline: a company that was once a world leader overtaken by more efficient producers in the Far East and a failure to recognise quickly enough that survival depended on size.

But it also serves as a salutary and very expensive lesson to Rolls that so-called business synergies are rarely all they are cracked up to be.

Having splashed out £300m in 1989 for Northern Engineering Industries, Parsons parent company, it is now facing a charge of £248m to withdraw from the large turbine generator end of the business on top of the losses racked up over the years. Parsons Power Generation Systems and International Combustion, the two businesses put up for sale yesterday, made losses last year of £30m on sales of £280m.

The theory, at the time, was impeccable. Rolls would marry its own expertise in aero-engine propulsion and light industrial power with NEI's large steam power generating businesses to form an unbeatable combination.

Unfortunately, it underestimated the

rapid consolidation that the industry was undergoing and the extent of the collapse in its home market. In truth, NEI had been tottering on the edge of losses for several years because, in its very nature, the business of building power stations also entails carrying large and specialised overheads. That, in turn, requires a constant level of high quality turnover.

NEI had some good and profitable switchgear businesses but Parsons was simply not big enough to hold its own - certainly not against the likes of its merged rivals, ABB and GEC-Alsthom, Siemens or Mitsubishi.

As the more mature markets of Europe dried up, Parsons was forced further afield in search of customers. Unfortunately, NEI was priced out of the biggest emerging market in the world, China, forcing it into the more risky Indian market. Even here, it has only managed to sign one contract for a £100m gas turbine station.

The irony is that Rolls has very successfully managed to claw itself out of a similar hole in its mainstream aero-engine business through a combination of bold technological development and astute risk-sharing.

The development of the big Trent aero-engine could have been the programme that broke Rolls' back. But Rolls brought in sufficient risk and reward-sharing partners to keep its head above water and is now enjoying the fruits of that with a share of the market on the big twin-engine jets approaching one third.

Indeed the spin off from the Trent - an industrial version of the engine - is making its debut and will be the focus for Rolls as it switches from large steam turbine generation to smaller gas turbine applications.

Rolls is optimistic that a buyer or majority partner can be found, perhaps in a developing country and points to the £56m Babcock made from selling its boiler business to Mitsui.

But who will be interested in a company without much of an order book competing in a market which in any case suffers from chronic overcapacity? Rolls waited until Sir Terry Harrison, the man who created NEI, had safely retired from the board before announcing its withdrawal. For the 2,500 workers on Tyneside and Derby whose jobs are now on the line, that may be the most ominous portent.

## A cloud over TWA's prospects

Jeffrey Erickson had a vision for Trans World Airlines. As its new chief executive, he dreamt of returning the airline to its former glory days. To that end he was in London last Wednesday evening lobbying MPs for TWA to be allowed to relaunch daily services from New York to Heathrow. A few hours later TWA Flight 600 exploded and crashed 20 miles off the coast of Long Island.

As he raced back to take charge of the airline's investigation into the disaster, uncomfortable memories must have loomed large of the fate that befell another American pioneer of the skies.

The bombing of PanAm flight 103 over Lockerbie in 1988 marked the beginning of the end for America's most famous flag-carrier. Lockheedie sapped what little consumer confidence PanAm still commanded. Within four years the airline that invented the transatlantic clipper service was gone, its international routes and hubs auctioned off to rivals and the rump of the business left to wither and die in bankruptcy protection.

TWA is not PanAm and we do not yet know whether Flight 600 was brought down by a bomb. Furthermore, the odds were already under PanAm long before the Lockerbie disaster due to its failure to react quickly enough to the deregulation of the US airline market. It was also the US flag-carrier without a home base.

By contrast TWA has big hub operations at St Louis and New York and ranks as the world's thirteenth largest airline, carrying 21 million passengers last year.

But there are also some startling similarities. TWA, like PanAm, has had a torrid time since the world airline industry went into recession at the end of the 1980s.

In 1991 TWA, then under the control of the US corporate raider Carl Icahn, and PanAm were both forced to sell off their routes from the US to Heathrow to survive.

TWA's were sold to American Airlines, PanAm's to United Airlines. But it did neither struggling carrier much good.

Within a year TWA was filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, as rising oil prices, the Gulf war and intense competition took their toll.

It survived and emerged from Chapter 11 a year later only to return to bankruptcy protection in 1995. It re-emerged following an employee buyout backed by a handful of Wall Street institutions but it remains saddled with debts of \$1.5bn.

Since its founding in the late 1920s, TWA has been associated with some famous initiatives and famous names. It was the first to launch an innovative rail and air trip from New York to Los Angeles that slashed coast-to-coast travel time to 48 hours. In 1939 it was bought by the billionaire Howard Hughes who finally sold out in 1965, by which time TWA was among the world's top three carriers.

Today TWA is a shadow of its former self. It presently operates only one flight to Britain - from St Louis to Gatwick. But if Mr Erickson gets his way then TWA would become a big player on the transatlantic once again. Buoyed by climbing profits - up from \$5.2m to \$25.3m in the last three months - he also wants to replace many of the aircraft in TWA's 189-strong fleet, the oldest in the US. Wednesday night's disaster off the coast of Long Island may have put paid to that and much more besides.

## DTI leaves UniChem ahead in Lloyds race

JOHN WILLCOCK

UniChem yesterday edged ahead of German company Gehe in the race to buy Lloyds Chemist, after the DTI unveiled tough conditions on any future bid by either suitor.

Jan Lang, President of the Board of Trade, said he would block the bids by UniChem and Gehe unless undertakings were given by the companies to sell certain pharmaceutical wholesaling businesses operated by Lloyds. The sales must be completed by 18 October.

UniChem launched its first bid for Lloyds in January, prompting Stuttgart-based Gehe to enter the fray. After four rounds of bidding, the latest cash offer by Gehe valued Lloyds at £649.9m, topping UniChem's second and final £617.3m cash-and-share offer. The bids were put on hold pending a Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation into the concentration of pharmaceutical wholesaling that would emerge if either bidder won the contest.

Mr Lang said yesterday that

he accepted the MMC conclusion that both bids could be anti-competitive. He also said that two of the five members of the MMC Group agreed with the anti-competitive findings "but identify further adverse effects and believe that the proposed mergers should be prohibited."

Lloyds's shares finished the day up 6p at 487p, after dipping in the wake of the announcement to 450p. The general City mood was that the deal would go through, but that ground between the two bidders was shifting.

A spokesman for Gehe, which is bidding for Lloyds via its UK subsidiary AAH, said yesterday: "There's a need for everyone to be realistic. This announcement means we would need to sell off nearly the whole of the wholesale operation at Lloyds. This has reduced the synergies for both of us [UniChem as well]."

UniChem said it was confident it could meet this undertaking. A source close to the company said it was "a pain in the neck" to have to go and search for new buyers, and in such a tight



Happier times: Allen Lloyd (left) with his brother, Peter, who left the company last summer owing to ill health

timetable, but that this did not attractively opportunity and would consult the Office of Fair Trading.

Both UniChem and AAH have roughly 30 per cent each of the UK wholesale pharmaceutical market. Lloyds has about 5 per cent, Boots between 5 and 10 per cent, and independent the rest.

Gehe's ardour for the deal

has cooled since it counter-bid against UniChem in January.

The Gehe spokesman sounded lukewarm yesterday, however. He pointed to Lloyds' recent profits warning, which forced the City to prune back forecasts for this year's pre-tax profit from £57m to £50m. Lloyds said that uncertainty over the bid had hit profits.

He also singled out comments by Lloyds chief executive Peter Lloyd recently to the effect that there was a clear staff morale problem at the company and that people were leaving.

Gehe added that the UK decision "requires the sale of virtually the whole of Lloyds Chemists' pharmaceutical wholesaling business which we believe will reduce available synergies materially."

## Burton bid nets Innovations bosses £21m

JOHN WILLCOCK

Innovations, the company that brings you catalogues in the colour supplements for fascinating little gadgets you never knew you needed, has sold out in a deal which brings its three top directors nearly £21m.

The supplier of such vital household equipment as automatic bread makers, 10-year light bulbs and electronic crossword puzzle solvers has sold up to clothing and furniture retailer Burton for £44.9m.

When asked for a list of gadgets the company markets yesterday, an Innovations spokeswoman sighed wearily and said: "You're going to make fun of us, aren't you? Journalists always do." However, the directors will have the last laugh with this



Looking ahead: Andrew Higginson of Burton

deal. They own 51 per cent of the company, and Burton is buying all their shares at 310p each, more than double the share price three months ago.

The three directors originally received their shares in a 1991 rights issue at 31p - exactly a tenth of Burton's bid price. Innovations' chairman Robin Klein stands to collect nearly £4m for his 1.3 million shares. Managing director Clive Bebbard's 1 million shares are worth just over £3m, while non-executive director Edward Cook will get a stonking £14.6m for his 4.7 million shares.

Analysts said that while the deal looked expensive - Innovations' shares stood at just 212p yesterday morning - any calculations should take into account the company's £18m cash pile.

The City also liked Burton's strategic reasons for the deal. It is acquiring Innovations' systems data bank and know-how in the booming market of direct

mail and home selling. Home shopping by cable and the Internet are already established in the US.

"What we're talking about with home shopping is really the opportunity for it in two to three years," said Burton finance director Andrew Higginson. "We see direct mail home shopping as a key growth area in the UK sector. Our core business is continuing to perform well and remains our key focus."

Burton already has 5 million store card customers, while Innovations also has 5 million customers on its data banks. Burton claims that the direct selling operation will not cannibalise the high street stores, but in fact encourage home customers to visit the stores.

Burton is keen to promote its

own brands such as Top Shop. An Innovations spokeswoman was keen to stress that it isn't all battery re-chargers and orthopaedic pillows. The company has a wide range of catalogues, including Hawkhead for outdoor clothing. It is also licensed by a number of museums such as the Victoria and Albert to produce their catalogues.

Burton shares finished the day 6.75p up at 151.5p, while Innovations soared, up 101p to 313p.

As well as announcing the deal, Burton said that "better trading" for the 19-week period to 13 July raised group sales by 8.5 per cent from the same period a year earlier. The gross margin for the period is up 2.1 percentage points.

## 'Fake' memo attempt to stop Costain's rescue package

TOM STEVENSON  
City Editor

Costain's battle for survival took a bizarre twist yesterday, just three days before a crucial extraordinary meeting on Monday to vote on a proposed rescue package for the troubled construction and engineering company.

In an apparent attempt to jeopardise the rescue, which would see a Malaysian construction company underwriting a £73m three-for-one rights issue, newspapers were yesterday sent an open letter calling for the immediate resignation of Costain chief executive Alan Lovell and an internal memo on Costain-headed notepaper, which the company described as a "fake". The letter purported to come

from a Costain Independent Shareholders' Association headed by Alisdair Stark. The group's self-styled chairman, Costain said yesterday Mr Stark held one share in the company and his wife one further share. The mobile phone contact number on the letter was yesterday switched off.

The provenance of the supposed internal memo was unclear last night. Claiming to be from Peter Bloomfield, managing estimator for Costain's South-east Asian division, the memo appeared to suggest a clampdown on dealings with the media by Costain staff on "Malaysian issues". A Costain spokesman said the signature on the memo was not Mr Bloomfield's and he had not written the memo. The two documents under-

lined the fraught atmosphere in which Costain is this weekend attempting to drum up support for the rescue package without which, the company claims, it will have no alternative but to call in administrative receivers. The package, which could see Intria, the Malaysian group, taking a 40 per cent stake in Costain, and bankers a further 35 per cent, is opposed by the company's two largest shareholders, Kharafi, the Kuwaiti industrial conglomerate, and Raymond International, a Saudi construction group.

Both have said they intend to oppose the proposals with their combined 38 per cent stake. The deal must be approved by 50 per cent of the votes cast at Monday's extraordinary meeting.

## Trio of bosses ousted in Liberty shake-out

NIC CIGUTTI

Liberty, the 120-year-old retail and textiles group, yesterday ousted three of its most senior executives as part of its bid to restore the troubled company to profitability.

Tony Salem, group retail director, Tom Logan, merchandise director and John Pugh, company secretary, are leaving the company by the end of this month.

The departing executives had already lost their position on the Liberty board in April, at the same time as Patrick Austen, Liberty's chief executive, departed after a three-year stint at the company's helm.

part of a board that has watched a decline in the brand.

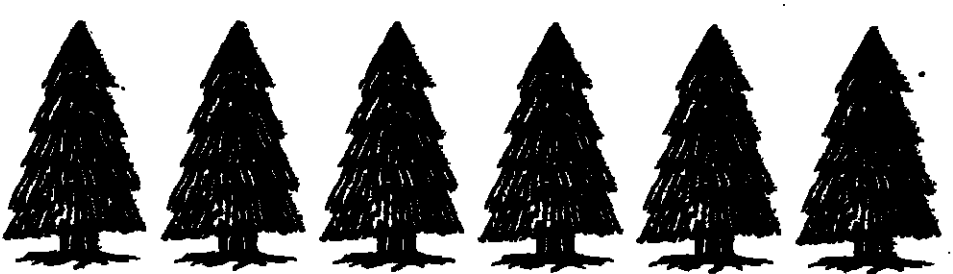
Ian Thomson, group managing director, said: "These moves follow the recent statements made by the chairman and are designed to strengthen resources to accelerate the process of recreating and developing Liberty as a premium quality international consumer products brand."

Replacing Mr Sales as retail operations director will be Anthony Hancock, who takes responsibility for Liberty's regent Street store and its airport shops. He held a similar post at House of Fraser. Claire Garabedian, who as merchandise director will be responsible for retail, has been at Liberty for 15 months. She previously worked at Harrods, House of Fraser and Harvey Nichols.

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July 1990

## Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-MARK	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1.59	6.4	5.3	1000	2.0	2.0	0.02
Canada	2.14	1.3	1.0	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Germany	2.30	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
France	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Italy	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Spain	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Japan	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Switzerland	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Netherlands	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Belgium	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Australia	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
New Zealand	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Saudi Arabia	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02
Singapore	2.45	4.4	3.7	1000	1.0	1.0	0.02

### OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Starting	Dollar	Country	Starting	Dollar
Argentina	1547	0.097	Spain	1633	0.090
Australia	1547	0.097	Sweden	1633	0.090
Belgium	1547	0.097	Switzerland	1633	0.090
Canada	1547	0.097	Taiwan	1633	0.090
France	1547	0.097	Thailand	1633	0.090
Germany	1547	0.097	UK	1633	0.090
Italy	1547	0.097	US	1633	0.090
Japan	1547	0.097			
Netherlands	1547	0.097			
Portugal	1547	0.097			
Spain	1547	0.097			
Sweden	1547	0.097			
Switzerland	1547	0.097			
Taiwan	1547	0.097			
Thailand	1547	0.097			
UK	1547	0.097			
US	1547	0.097			

### Tourist Rates

Country	1 Week	2 Weeks	1 Month	3 Months
US	1.59	1.59	1.59	1.59
Canada	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14
Germany	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30
France	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Italy	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Spain	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Japan	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Switzerland	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Netherlands	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Belgium	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Australia	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
New Zealand	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Saudi Arabia	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45
Singapore	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45

### Interest Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
US	8.75%	UK	10.00%
Germany	8.75%	France	8.75%
Canada	8.75%	Italy	8.75%
Japan	8.75%	Spain	8.75%
Switzerland	8.75%	Netherlands	8.75%
Belgium	8.75%	Australia	8.75%
Australia	8.75%	New Zealand	8.75%
New Zealand	8.75%	Saudi Arabia	8.75%
Saudi Arabia	8.75%	Singapore	8.75%

### Bond Yields

Country	Yield	Country	Yield
US	8.75%	UK	10.00%
Germany	8.75%	France	8.75%
Canada	8.75%	Italy	8.75%
Japan	8.75%	Spain	8.75%
Switzerland	8.75%	Netherlands	8.75%
Belgium	8.75%	Australia	8.75%
Australia	8.75%	New Zealand	8.75%
New Zealand	8.75%	Saudi Arabia	8.75%
Saudi Arabia	8.75%	Singapore	8.75%

### Money Market Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
US	8.75%	UK	10.00%
Germany	8.75%	France	8.75%
Canada	8.75%	Italy	8.75%
Japan	8.75%	Spain	8.75%
Switzerland	8.75%	Netherlands	8.75%
Belgium	8.75%	Australia	8.75%
Australia	8.75%	New Zealand	8.75%
New Zealand	8.75%	Saudi Arabia	8.75%
Saudi Arabia	8.75%	Singapore	8.75%

### Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement Price	High/Low	Settlement Price	High/Low
Long UK Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long US Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Euro Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Japan Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Australia Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long New Zealand Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Saudi Arabia Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Singapore Bond	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

### Life FT-SE Index Option

Contract	Settlement Price	High/Low	Settlement Price	High/Low
Long UK Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long US Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Euro Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Japan Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Australia Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long New Zealand Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Saudi Arabia Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Singapore Index	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

### Commodities

Commodity	Price	Commodity	Price
Oil	10.00	Gold	100.00
Gas	10.00	Silver	100.00
Coal	10.00	Copper	100.00
Wheat	10.00	Aluminum	100.00
Corn	10.00	Zinc	100.00
Soybeans	10.00	Nickel	100.00
Wheat	10.00	Iron Ore	100.00
Corn	10.00	Steel	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

### 100 Largest Insurance Funds (Continued)

Fund	Assets	Fund	Assets
UK Equity	100.00	US Equity	100.00
UK Bond	100.00	US Bond	100.00
UK Dividend	100.00	US Dividend	100.00
UK Income	100.00	US Income	100.00
UK Growth	100.00	US Growth	100.00
UK Value	100.00	US Value	100.00
UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00

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UK Balanced	100.00	US Balanced	100.00
UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
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UK International	100.00	US International	100.00
UK Real Estate	100.00	US Real Estate	100.00
UK Hedge	100.00	US Hedge	100.00







**For all Sunday's  
Betting & Sports  
action read The Life**

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**TOMORROW!**

**The Sporting Life**









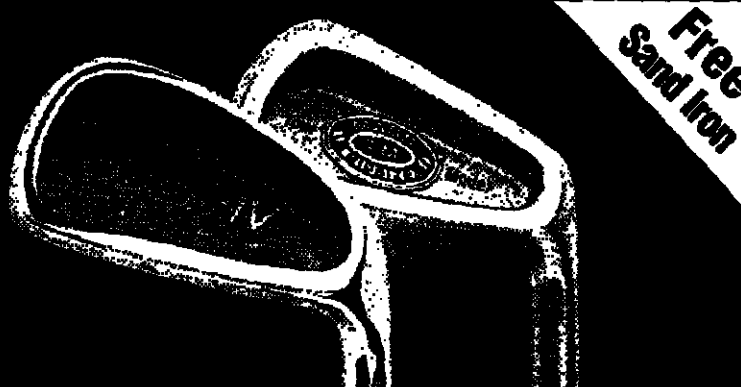






## AROUND ROYAL LYTHAM

# Slazenger®





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# SPORT

LIFE WITH STEVEN REDGRAVE

Matthew Pinsent tells all

page 26

WASIM AKRAM INTERVIEW

In Monday's 24 tabloid pages of sport

THE 125TH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP: Nicklaus moves within one stroke of the leaders as Faldo consolidates his challenge

## McGinley is the hottest of them all

TIM GLOVER

reports from Royal Lytham

Paul McGinley, who has never won on the European Tour and who has never even made the half-way cut in the Open Championship, shared the lead with the American Tom Lehman last night at eight under par, a stroke in front of a more familiar figure, the 56-year-old Jack Nicklaus. The 125th Open is possibly the hottest on record and that happens to be the perfect balm for Jack's troublesome back.

McGinley, a 29-year-old Dubliner, missed a four-foot putt at the 18th that would have given him course record 64. The highlight of his extraordinary round was a hole in one at the ninth where he hit a soft 7 iron that flew about eight feet to the right of the flag and then disappeared into the hole with a touch of Irish side spin. He also had four birdies on the front nine which he covered in 29 strokes.

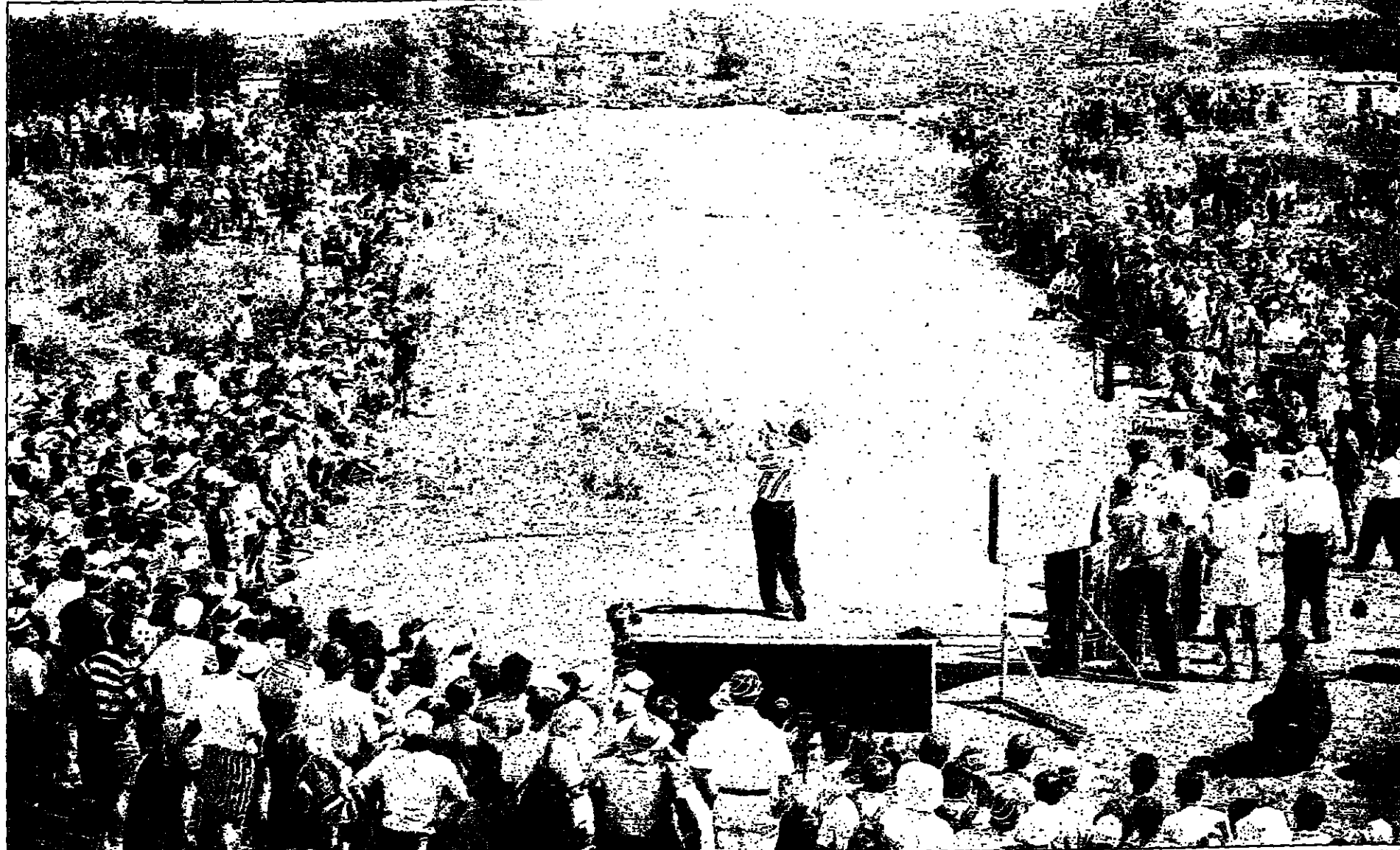
The portents were hardly good for McGinley when he was one of those blown away in the Scottish Open at Carnoustie and last Saturday night he made the long drive down to prepare for qualifying at St Ann's Old Links. "Something clicked on

Sunday morning and I started to get my rhythm back," McGinley said. He shot 66 in the first round of qualifying. "Nobody was as surprised as me."

McGinley was born in 1966, the year Nicklaus won the first of his three Open titles. It was at Muirfield and Nicklaus won with an aggregate of two under. In those days he was called Ohio Fats and by casting a shadow over Arnold Palmer he was not the all-American pin-up boy. Palmer, of course, played in his last Open 12 months ago and Nicklaus has taken up the torch for the Golden Oldies.

At the beginning of the year Nicklaus doubted whether he would play here because of indifferent form: on Wednesday there was an even greater doubt as he did what a lot of people in their mid-fifties do-he awoke complaining of a bad back. Yesterday he hit a four iron to within eight feet of the first hole and tapped in the putt for a birdie two. The Golden Bear's balm army was on the march, armed with sun block, sunglasses and a variety of headgear that would put Royal Ascot in the shade.

It was a worthwhile crusade. Nicklaus had another two at the ninth and he went to the turn in 32. He had further birdies at the



Nick Faldo gets his drive away at the fifth in the second round of the Open Championship at Royal Lytham yesterday

Photograph: Robert Hall

10th and 14th and when he walked down the 18th fairway they gave him a standing ovation. He doffed his cap, complete with the Golden Bear logo, and had he made a six-foot putt at the last he would have shot 65, equalling his lowest round in an Open. Jack's back? "I got up at 5.45am, did my exercises and felt all right. Three putts on the back nine spun out, really good putts. I can't be too unhappy can

I? When I putt well I can be a match for anyone. My problem the next couple of days will be managing myself, not my game. To have a chance I have to drive the ball well."

Nicklaus would not have played here had he thought he would not make the cut. "I don't want to play two rounds and take a spot away from someone," he said. "I know what playing well feels like and I know what my game is like when I play well. I know how I am mentally and how my composure is and I am pretty near with those elements even if I'm not hitting the ball that well."

Also on seven under is Peter Hedblom, who equalled the course record of 65, and Ernie Els

and a stroke further back in Nick Faldo who had a second 68. "I'm in a good position," Faldo said. "I'm chipping away and it will get tougher over the weekend. Judging the bounce, that's the key. The shots were good, the irons were good. This is a thinking man's course and I'm enjoying the atmosphere. You want the adrenaline to flow." Faldo, who, like Nicklaus has three Open championships to his name, had four birdies and a solitary bogey, at the short 12th where he three-putted.

Hedblom has hardly made a cut since winning the Moroccan Open at the beginning of the year but he said: "I always thought I could do this," Hedblom said. "It's not a surprise for me." Nor would the Swede be surprised if

Nicklaus won the championship. "When I saw his name on the leaderboard I was thinking it would be a great feeling to play with him, you know the biggest man in golf," Hedblom said. "Even at 56 his head is so good he knows how to play smart golf and around this course you really need to use your head. He has got the best mind in golf, ever. He could win around here, no problem at all."

Els, who added a 67 to a 68, said he wanted the wind to blow to "put the players in the real world and make it a tournament not just for those making a few putts." The South African did not just for those making a few putts. "The South African did not just for those making a few putts," the former Wild Thing admitted. So much for homework. "That hurt a lot," Daly said, "but

really. He has the chance to win. He has won a couple of these things so he knows what to do." A couple of these things is not quite how the Royal and Ancient would describe its championship but Els, who won the US Open two years ago, is another who is not only well placed but well qualified to lift the old silver claret jug tomorrow.

Unlike John Daly, Els would put the trophy to the use for which it was intended. Daly, the defending champion, shot 73 that included a double bogey six at the 15th where he drove out of bounds. "I didn't know there was an out of bounds down there," the former Wild Thing admitted. So much for homework. "That hurt a lot," Daly said, "but

it was a horrible round of golf. My putter is what's killing me. They're just kinda bouncing over the place. When you stand over a four footer and you're saying you're going to make it and then knowing you're going to make it, it's tough."

Carl Mason got to eight under with five holes to play. He had a triple bogey at the 17th, a bogey at the last to finish on a 70. "I just wish those final holes would disappear," Mason said. "If they gave me a couple of shots each day on the last hole then I might have a chance, was almost perfect golf of there." At the 17th he drove in a bunker and then found an playable lie in a gorse bush. More reports, page 27

### THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

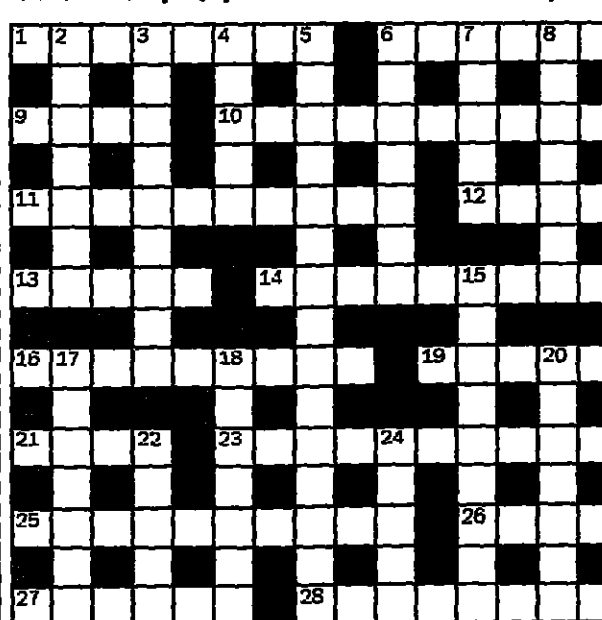
Lost for words?

Turn to the Franklin Bookman Dictionary and Thesaurus.

No. 3044, Saturday 20 July

By Mass

Friday's Solution



Last Saturday's Solution

- ACROSS**
- 3-D image; felled tree, by house, on drive (8)
  - Hard pushed over tree in Indian location (6)
  - Tropical tree cut back, chunky thing (4)
  - A fellow's cutting knotty tree? Task resembles earlier one (5,5)
  - End for tree? Crack round side could prove steady (10)
  - Last of snapshots, facing tree - but not last in reel (4)
  - Stately tree stripped of fringes by endless storm (5)
  - Bury stone of first water between tree and path (5,4)
  - Took time in flower and tree garden (9)

- Weapon made from Southern tree (5)
- Guides heading off for the trees (4)
- The oak-tree has appeal in the fall, becoming rich (6,2,2)
- Fortified spots apparent from treetops, reportedly (10)
- Back of tree's curling, round Eastern spruce (4)
- City's rejected patch of trees (6)
- One tapping first of latex, fluid in trees (8)
- Evasive - nothing exposed in speech (7)
- It's instrumental in making bobtail golf (9)

- Budget lacks point and proportion (5)
- Rings having mainly tree-like connections (5,1,5,4)
- Bar fish eaten by little lady (7)
- Offends Monsieur, voicing conditions (5)
- One woman's written about married states? (7)
- Enfilade, about one can, boiled in utensil (9)
- Rescue with ease (7)
- Make article in clay? ... (7)
- It's in stone (or rock) (7)
- Bones showing up in carcass (5)
- Head, about start of term, broods (5)

THE FRANKLIN SCRAMBLE

Make the longest word you can from CLUTTER Friday's Scramble: HARMONY

Win a Franklin Bookman Dictionary and Thesaurus worth £100

The first correct solution to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday win a Franklin Bookman Dictionary and Thesaurus worth £100. Answers and the winner's name will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winner was D Britten, Westham, Kent.

### The ups and downs of yesterday's second round at the Open

Hole	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Out	In	Total
Par	3	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	4	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	35	36	71
Yards	206	437	467	393	212	490	502	418	164	334	542	198	342	445	463	357	487	414	3330	3582	6912
McGinley	2	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	1	4	5	3	4	3	5	4	3	5	36	36	69-134
Hedblom	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	34	31	65-135
Nicklaus	2	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	2	3	5	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	32	34	66-135
Els	4	3	4	4	3	5	4	3	3	3	5	3	4	2	5	4	4	3	33	34	67-135
V Singh	3	4	5	3	3	5	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	5	4	33	34	67-135
Pavin	2	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	2	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	33	33	66-136
Brooks	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	34	36	70-137

Clips: Information Services for Sport

### Shoulder injury puts out Langer

Bernhard Langer yesterday withdrew from the championship because of a shoulder complaint which contributed to a disappointing opening 75 on Thursday.

Langer, who had a lengthy break earlier this year because of an injured right shoulder, said this latest injury was totally different. "That was a joint problem. This is muscular, probably a rotator cuff injury."

The same injury, more often associated with baseball pitchers, forced Tom Watson to withdraw before the start of the Open, and Langer admitted that yesterday on the practice range he could not take the club back above his waist. "I couldn't make a backswing and if you can't make a backswing you can't play golf," he said.

The German recently fought

off another case of the "yips" - a muscular spasm while putting - which affected him at the US Open last month when he was disqualified for signing for the wrong score.

He said then that if his difficulties continued he might think of retiring, but he overcame the problem quickly and a week later he nearly won the French Open, losing on the first playoff hole to Robert Allenby.

### Atlanta expecting dream start

Olympic Games

MIKE ROWBOTTOM reports from Atlanta

As the Olympic torch was carried through Atlanta yesterday en route to the Centennial Olympic stadium - and two to three hours behind schedule at midday - the first competitive action of the Games was tantalisingly close.

The first nation are due to start the proceedings this morning with their opening hockey match against the Netherlands, and medals will be decided in fencing, judo, shooting, weightlifting and swimming. But the main focus of

home attention will be on the other end of the day as the United States basketball team take part in their opening match at the Georgia Dome.

"Dream Team III" - Shaquille O'Neal, Hakeem Olajuwon et al - gets its campaign underway against Argentina at the Georgia Dome. So strongly are the NBA professionals fancied that the odds being quoted in Las Vegas yesterday on them winning gold were 1-75. The nearest-fancied challengers, Croatia, are 25-1.

More competitive action is forecast in the men's 100 and 200 metres - in the former, Frankie Fredericks is 5-4 favourite, with

Linford Christie back in fifth place at 8-1. Michael Johnson is favoured to win the long sprint on his home soil at 1-3, ahead of Fredericks at 2-1.

And as the action approached, the Atlantans who had spent six years planning for the Games were hoping that the problems which had beset the preparations - unfinished buildings, temperatures up into the 90s, disputes over policing and a chaotic transportation system creaking under the strain - would give way to more positive images.

A total of 1,835 medals, including 404 gold, await owners at venues in Atlanta, Columbus and Savannah.

### OLYMPIC GUIDE

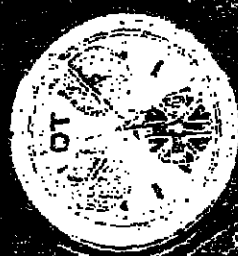
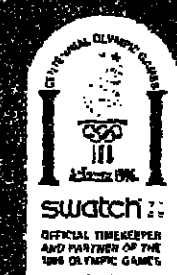
Since the printing of our Olympic Guide, distributed with today's newspaper, a number of changes have been made to the timetable in Atlanta. In particular, there are several significant changes to the athletics programme. Readers should check with the daily timetable we will print each day throughout the tournament.

Our guide also omitted the following cycling events (times in BST): 30 July: Men's mountain bikes, individual cross-country (15.00-17.45); women's individual cross-country (19.30-21.45); 3 August: Men's individual time trial (13.30 start); women's individual time trial (14.00 start).

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DALEY THOMPSON:

Be wrote Olympic history with two golds. Each one a thriller in 10 chapters.



OLYMPIC LEGENDS BY SWATCH

swatch